Now it's Atong Ang who'll testify vs Erap

STORY BELOW, COLUMN 1

Gov't to sell 'Ang Pangulo'

BY DONNA S. CUETO

MALACAÑANG is preparing to sell the presidential yacht, the BRP Ang Pangulo, as well as other "presidential luxury assets" to generate revenues.

"To address the budget deficit, we are looking for more assets to sell," President Macapagal-

GOV'T/ A22

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
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Loi's Senate run gets mixed reviews

BY CATHY YAMSUAN, AMY BAINBRIDGE AND TJ BURGONIO

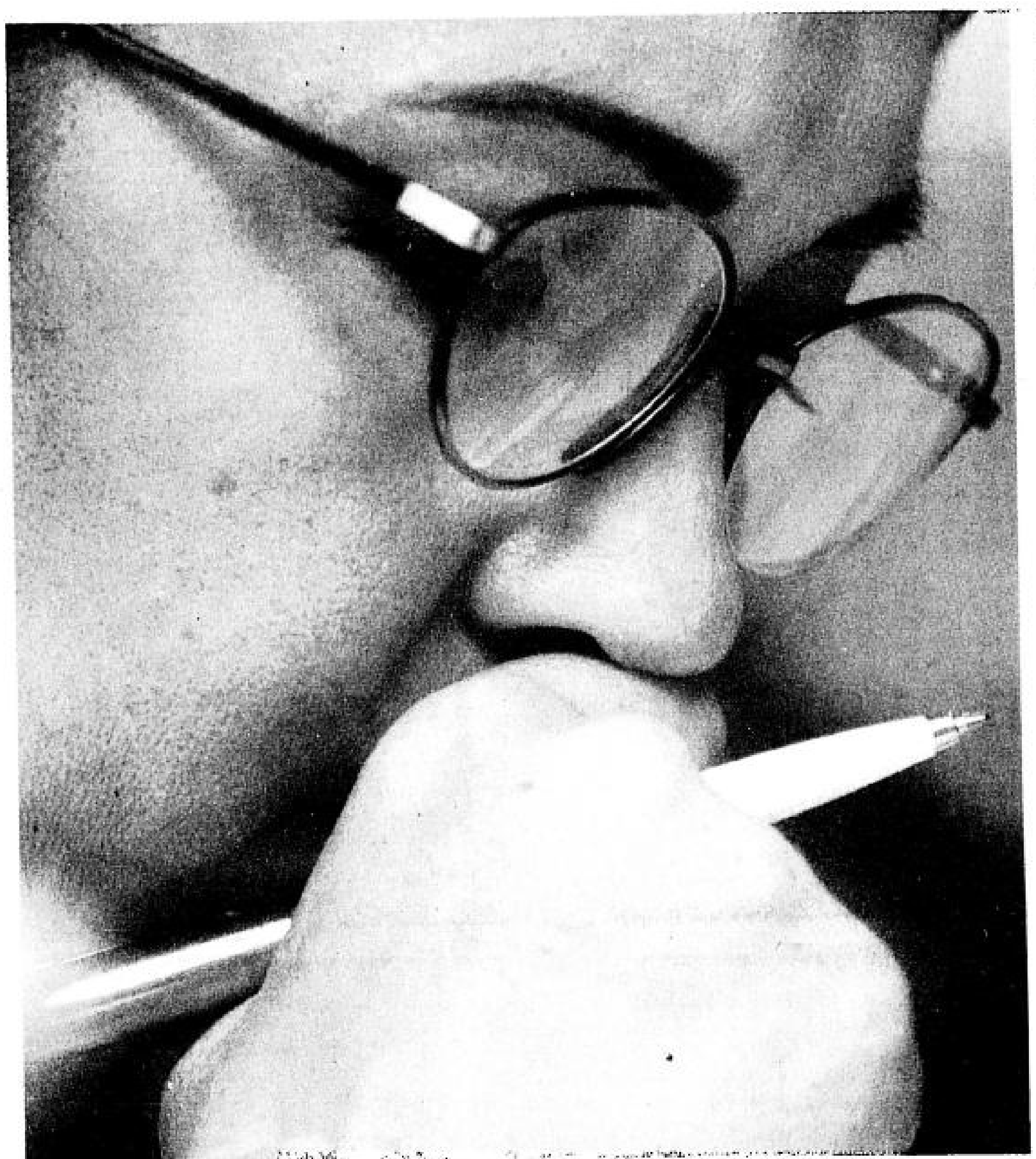
THE SENATORIAL bid of former first lady, Dr. Loi Ejercito, was the talk of the town yesterday, some nice, others not.

The response to the surprise announcement ranged from being the "saving grace" of her

LOI'S/ A22

GMA discards Abadia

President also reviewing appointment of new PNP chief



THINKING out her list of appointments, and checking it twice, or so it would seem in this file photo of President Macapagal taken last November. EDWIN BACASMAS

BY CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO AND DONNA S. CUETO

BOWING to pressure from various sectors, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced last night that she had recalled her appointment of retired Gen. Lisandro Abadia as national security adviser.

In her first formal nationwide address, the President said she had given the Department of Interior and Local Governments seven days to determine whether she should also recall her appointment of Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza as chief of the Philippine National Police.

But she said she was standing by her appointment of Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez and Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong, who are both from Mindanao and who, she noted, were also the subject of heavy criticism.

"General Abadia, truly an officer and a gentleman, has acknowledged my option to recall his appointment," the President said. "I am exercising that option."

She said she made the move on the strength of a motion for reconsideration on a case involving the alleged misuse of the military pension fund, the Retirement, Separation and Benefits System (RSBS).

The case is pending at the Supreme Court.

In a press briefing hastily called last night, Abadia said he had voluntarily "returned" his appointment to the President as "an act of self-sacrifice" and to "unburden" her of further anxiety.

He said he met with Ms Macapagal yesterday afternoon, but did not give details of the meeting.

Abadia said that even if the Office of the Ombudsman had already cleared him of involvement in the pension fund scam, the controversy would not die down.

"I will be a burden to this administration. I do this as an act of self-sacrifice, so this government can move on unhampered by any controversy," he said.

"Let me reiterate that I am returning the appointment not because I am guilty

GMA/ A22

ABADIA "returns" appointment; but "why me?" JESS YUSON

FIRST TV ADDRESS

Macapagal warns foes: 'I shall crush you'

ALTHOUGH rumors of coup plots against her new government have died down, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday surprisingly warned of "evil designs" to destabilize her administration and sternly promised her enemies: "I shall crush you."

"There are still some groups plotting against our government," she told the nation in her first nationally televised address.

"The enemies of the state continue to destabilize our duly constituted government by machinations and black propaganda. Proceeds of ill-gotten wealth are being used to erode the credibility of this government and to subvert our hard-earned freedoms," Ms Macapagal said.

She did not elaborate, but the statement appeared to be a direct reference to ousted President Joseph Estrada and his backers. Government prosecutors have claimed they have compiled a paper trail proving Estrada illegally amassed billions during 31 months in power.

Last night, Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito, the former president's son by Guia Gomez, said he felt Ms Macapagal's statements were aimed at his father or his supporters and accused her of "character assassination."

"She's preaching unity (and) healing but then she continues to hurl all kinds of threats against us," Ejercito said. "We said we will fight the legal way, peaceful and political."

He said his father would not consider military action or violent means to regain office.

"We hear things that there are movements," Ejercito said. "If there are, we don't have anything to do with that. It could be forces sympathetic to President Estrada. The President (Estrada) is well-loved by the military. It is common knowledge that a lot of junior officers are not happy."

Ms Macapagal, who was sworn in Jan. 20, addressed the issue of what should be done with Estrada, whose impeachment trial was suspended four days before he left office and now has been turned into a

MACAPAGAL/ A22

Erap made ₱15B in 2 years, say prosecutors

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL

IN HIS 31 months in office, ousted President Joseph Estrada was able to stash away P10-P15 billion in secret accounts in 15 banks, private prosecutors said yesterday.

"We have only scratched the surface of what is the hidden wealth of the (former) President," Ricardo Nepomuceno, leader of the group of private prosecutors, yesterday told newsmen.

Three House prosecutors in Estrada's impeachment trial—Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo, Misamis Oriental Rep. Oscar Moreno and Quezon Rep. Wigberto Tañada—earlier Tuesday turned over to Nepomuceno's group the task of pursuing criminal charges against the disgraced leader.

Eduardo de los Angeles, one of the private prosecutors, said evidence showed Estrada used six aliases, such as Jose Velarde, Jose Marcelo and Kelvin Garcia, in hiding his ownership of accounts in 15 banks.

Estrada also used the alias John Uy, De los Angeles said. "I cannot tell you all the names used because the witnesses may be put in grave danger."

He said some of the witnesses were still reluctant and fearful but some were "very cooperative."

De los Angeles said the bank accounts contained a total of P10-P15 billion in unexplained wealth.

And that does not include dollar-denominated bank accounts linked to Estrada, accounts in the names of his acknowledged mistresses and the mansions that he had built for his women, according to the private prosecutor.

One of Estrada's mistresses, former movie starlet Laarni Enriquez had P600 million in one

ERAP/ A4

Atong Ang turns back on Erap

Mark Jimenez placed under witness protection program

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL AND DONA PAZZIBUGAN

CHARLIE "Atong" Ang is the latest among the associates of ousted President Joseph Estrada who have sent word that they are willing to testify against Estrada, a lawyer privy to the negotiations between Ang and the Department of Justice yesterday said.

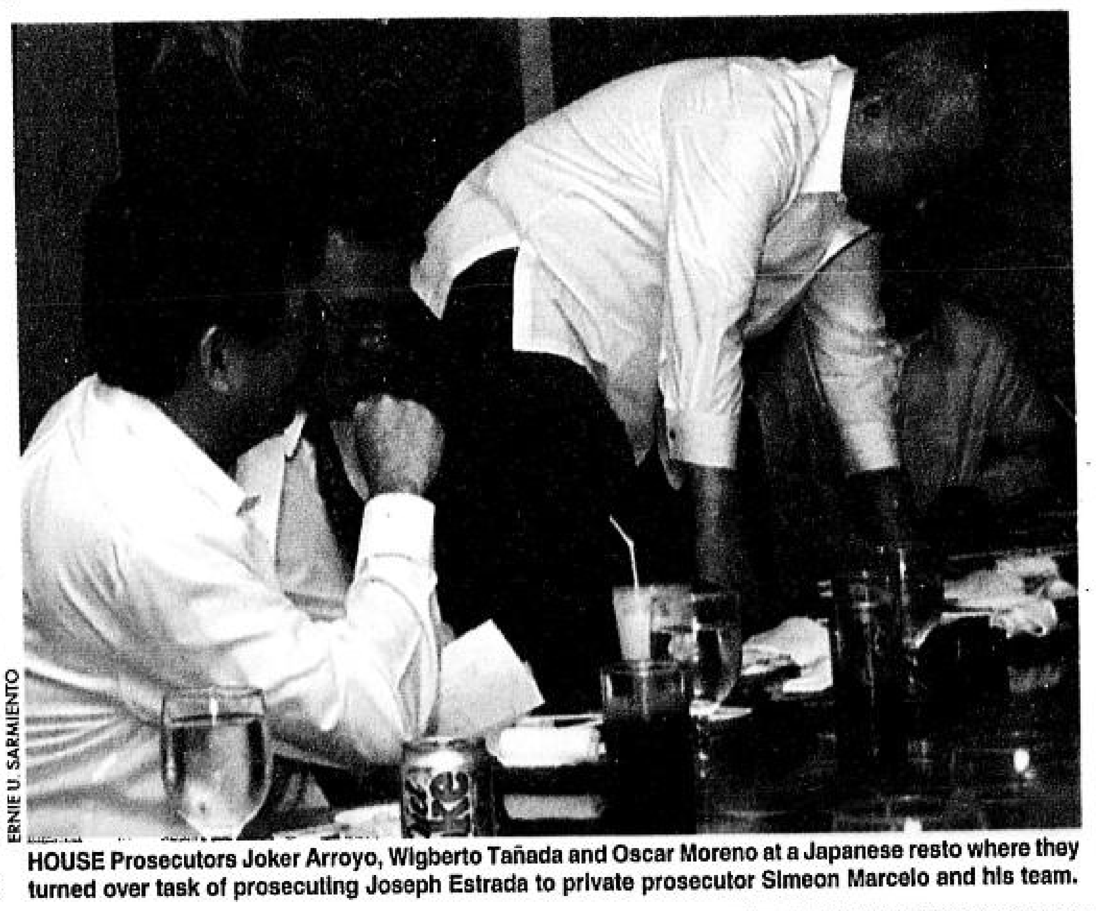
Businessman Mark Jimenez has already been placed under the witness protection program after he agreed to cooperate with the Department of Justice in the prosecution of Estrada.

"With Jimenez's statement, we have new evidence. In fact, with his testimony alone we can convict the former President. It is independent of what we already have," Justice Secretary Hernando Perez yesterday said.

Perez said that "now that Estrada is out of power, many have become bold."

Edward S. Serapio, a personal lawyer of Estrada, has also signified his intention to testify against the ousted President.

ATONG/ A4



ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

HOUSE Prosecutors Joker Arroyo, Wigberto Tañada and Oscar Moreno at a Japanese resto where they turned over task of prosecuting Joseph Estrada to private prosecutor Simeon Marcelo and his team.

JV to Erap pals: Don't betray him to save your skin

BY CARLITO PABLO

JOSEPH Victor Ejercito yesterday urged the friends and associates of deposed President Estrada not to testify in the criminal cases filed against his father.

"I am appealing to them not to turn around just to save themselves," said Ejercito, Estrada's son by former movie starlet Guia Gomez. "I hope that they will stand by their principles."

In a press conference, Ejercito said that his father was saddened by reports that his friends were going to turn against him.

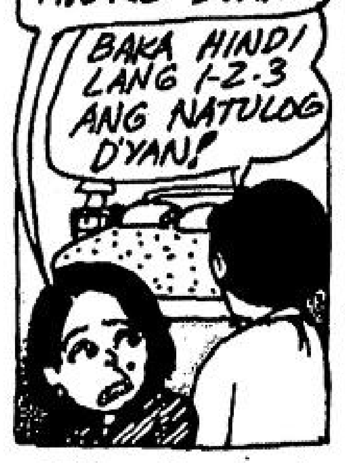
"In politics, there are really no permanent friends, only permanent interests," he said.

Businessman Mark Jimenez, whom the former President described as a financial genius, had already revealed to government lawyers Estrada's alleged involvement in several deals that he brokered.

Eduardo Serapio, a personal lawyer of Mr. Estrada, has expressed willingness to spill the beans on his client while Charlie "Atong" Ang, a gambling buddy of Estrada, has also sent word that he wants to testify against Estrada.

Ejercito said Dante Tan, alleged partner of his father in BW Resources, the company involved in stock manipulation, was also being pressured by the new administration.

JV/ A4


AYOKO D'YAN!
BAKA HINDI LANG 1-2-3 ANG NATULOG D'YAN!

Gloria not keen on Erap's bed

BY VOLT CONTRERAS

"WHO knows who has slept there."

This is apparently why President Macapagal-Arroyo has chosen not to occupy the Malacañang bedroom of her deposed predecessor, one of her advisers said yesterday.

GLORIA/ A4

Second FRONT PAGE

SINO KAYA SA KANILA ANG PAG-PAPALAING MAGING VP?

VICE PRESIDENCY DERBY

Gloria to name even potential rival

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said she would not hesitate to appoint a potential presidential rival as her vice president, whom she said she would name probably by next week.

Noting that a number of senators were being endorsed for the post, "all (of them) very qualified," the President said that "whoever is named, it will be the right choice."

The top two contenders are Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Senate Minority Leader Teofisto Guingona, both of whom are known to have presidential ambitions.

Aside from Guingona and Pimentel, Senators Franklin Drilon, Loren Legarda-Leviste and Ramon Magsaysay Jr. are also said to be contenders for the post.

Ms Macapagal is qualified to seek a full six-year term in May 2004, and conventional thinking holds that she would refrain from choosing someone who might want to run against her in the next presidential contest.

"I am not thinking of that. I am already President and that is a great honor. No matter what happens, I am President, so I already have that honor," Ms Macapagal said.

Under the Constitution, the President has to choose her vice president from among the members of Congress.

As speculations swirled on who was likely to get the plum post, Guingona yesterday circulated at the Senate a resolution to revamp the Senate leadership.

He reportedly "offered" the post of Senate President to Drilon, who declined.

According to sources in the chamber, as of 5 p.m. yesterday there were only six signatures on the resolution declaring the four top Senate posts vacant. These included the positions of Senate president, president pro-tempore and majority and minority leaders.

Senate President Pimentel, who had announced his resignation on Jan. 16, was seen talking to each of the senators, apparently to counter Guingona's move.

Aside from Pimentel, the proposed revamp would affect Senate President Pro Tempore Blas Ople, Senate Majority Leader Francisco Tatad and Guingona, who is the minority leader.

Except for Guingona, the top three Senate officials had been elected by a majority allied with ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Senators Raul Roco, Juan Flavier, Renato Cayetano, Legarda-Leviste and Magsaysay have reportedly signed the resolution.

"The administration senators want to have the majority seats and positions in the Senate," Magsaysay said.

Legarda-Leviste said the resolution merely states the "need to reorganize the Senate leadership because of recent events."

Guingona is said to have made the move after meeting with President Macapagal. The Malacañang meeting was also reportedly attended by Lakas Senators Cayetano, Flavier and Legarda-Leviste.

Sources said Guingona may have initiated the Senate revamp to clinch the vice presidency.

"I think this reorganization is hinged on the vice presidency (contest). Whoever is not chosen will become the Senate President. I think that's the package," said one senator.

A senator said Drilon had declined Guingona's offer of the Senate presidency "because he did not want to open old wounds."

Drilon was ousted from the Senate presidency in November after he bolted from the ruling LAMP coalition when charges that Estrada had received illegal gambling pay-offs came out.

Sen. Robert Jaworski said he wanted time to "study" the resolution.

Sen. John Osmena, one of Estrada's staunch allies, said he was also approached. But he said he and his allies wanted to hold a "caucus" before making any move.

So far, none of the 11 senators who voted against the opening of crucial evidence in Estrada's impeachment trial has signed Guingona's resolution.

It was the second resolution sponsored by Guingona. The first was the resolution of support for Ms Macapagal which was reportedly signed by 13 senators, including four Estrada allies.

The resolution however has not been filed yet because Lakas Sen. Robert Barbers, who is in the United States recuperating from a throat operation, had sent word that he would sign when he arrives within the week.

A senator has also complained that former Speaker Jose de Venecia was interfering in the Senate reorganization.

De Venecia is said to have been present at the meeting between Ms Macapagal and Lakas senators in Malacañang.

In Davao City, Rey Magno Teves, president of Mincode, a coalition of NGOs in Mindanao, endorsed Pimentel for the vice presidential post, citing his track record as "a man driven by principles" and untainted by scandal.

Teves said Pimentel and President Macapagal would make a good team in fighting graft and corruption in government and in promoting social equity.

He also praised Guingona's record of pursuing pro-people and nationalist laws in the Senate, as well as the simple fact of his being a Mindanaoan.

But Teves' group believes that Pimentel has an edge over Guingona for consistently advancing Mindanao concerns.

The Samahang Laiko ng Pilipinas, a group of Catholic lay people in Davao, also backed Pimentel for vice president, for his "unquestionable integrity and independent-mindedness" and track record in public office.

The group said Pimentel enjoys wide support not only among the participants of People Power II but also among Mindanaoans. ***Reports from AFP, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau.***

Ledac to be revived

By Donna S. Cueto

THE LEGISLATIVE and Executive Development Advisory Council, which had been a feature of the Ramos administration, will be revived under the new administration to fast-track passage of certain administration-backed bills.

Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo said that they had found the Ledac useful, and would revive the weekly meetings between congressional leaders and Malacañang officials.

Romulo said the Economic Coordinating Council had been abolished, because mostly the discussions at that level were just a reiteration of the discussions in the various board committees of the National Economic and Development Authority.

The government had set a new target of 4.5 percent for the Gross National Product, and 4.3 percent for the Gross Domestic Product.

Romulo said he is confident the proposed "revised" budget they had submitted would be passed by Congress, and that they would be able to reach their new economic targets. He would not say how much was the revised budget of the new government.

The new economic team of the Ms Macapagal was also presented yesterday to the press, including Economic Planning chief Dante Canlas and Budget Chief Emilia Boncodin.

Boncodin said the new economic team was "very solid" and good.

"We knew each other way before so we are a good team," she said.

Be your own woman, Gloria told

By Volt Contreras

PRODUCE a list of businessman-relatives. Be "your own woman" and "consult less" with the Church, Cory (former President Aquino) and other VIPs from People Power II. Stop being just "a smiley face" dispensing motherhood statements.

While she easily won the confidence of the academe, President Macapagal got these bits of unsolicited advice at a forum organized yesterday by the University of the Philippines' political science department.

The forum, attended by UP pol-sci professors and their students, focused on the topic: "What can we expect from the Macapagal-Arroyo presidency?"

Good credentials

Panelists in the forum were generally optimistic about the administration's prospects, noting that Ms Macapagal possessed good credentials, her choices to fill the Cabinet were generally good and that she was able to effectively convey her seriousness to the people.

The she translated her earlier pronouncement that she would bar her relatives from applying for government contracts into an administrative order "showed that she really means business," said one of the panelists.

"She is telling government officials not to be afraid to turn away her relatives who might want to do business with the government. So her next step now should be to list down who these relatives are," said Prof. Olivia Caoili.

But such sternness of purpose should also show on her personal disposition and her public addresses, according to Prof. Mirriam Coronel Ferrer.

Smiling too much

"The President smiles too much. But this is no longer election time where you need to always put on a pretty face. She needs to elaborate on her policies (in public speaking engagements) and go beyond dropping key words like 'level playing field' and 'moral leadership'," Ferrer observed.

Dr. Natalia MLM Morales said the President should not be too accommodating to parties whom she thought she owed for her position

"She must show that she is her own woman; consult less with the Catholic Church, Cory, (former President) Ramos and limit the influence of the forces who helped her come into power," Morales added.

She said that perhaps because of the euphoria over her swift and dramatic ascension, Ms Macapagal "has also become too spontaneous lately, appearing in two many getting-to-know-you interviews on TV."

Less small tak

There should be less and less of such "small talk" from hereon for the President, Morales said.

The panelists also gave their views on how Ms Macapagal would handle "inherited" problems.

Ferrer said that in the peace process, President Macapagal's approach was expected to be just a "follow-through" of the accomplishments of former Presidents Aquino and Ramos, noting that her Cabinet included members who had previous experience in negotiating with the various rebel groups.

"The country may no longer witness an escalation of armed confrontation in Mindanao, given Ms. Macapagal's own background," Ferrer said.

"Her being the former social welfare secretary helped her see the impact of the total war policy of the Estrada administration, particularly the problem of the refugees. So we could expect her to prevent the recurrence of these difficulties," she said.

As the forum displayed its optimism, an alliance of small- and medium-scale entrepreneurs and militant groups for its part sent notice that it would closely watch the administration's moves.

The People's Challenge was launched yesterday to monitor the President's economic policies and ensure that she would "reverse the current track of the Philippine economy and implement a nationalist agenda." *With a report from Blanche Rivera*

Cops get leads on big cases

By D. Veridiano

THE NEW police leadership is being inundated with leads and information that could mean the speedy solution of recent sensational crimes, among them the mysterious disappearance of public relations executive Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and the bloody Rizal Day bombings.

This was revealed yesterday by Deputy Director Gen. Leandro Mendoza, acting Philippine National Police chief.

Mendoza refused to give any details about the so-called tips, beyond saying that he was optimistic they would help in solving at least the Dacer case and the Rizal Day bombings.

"We have some leads. We are pursuing them vigorously," said Mendoza, adding that investigators are pursuing another angle to the cases.

Mendoza said that more evidence and witnesses had come up after the EDSA uprising, which prompted the PNP to re-investigate.

'Workhorse' at DOTC is youngest in Cabinet

By Rocky Nazareno

PRESIDENT Macapagal swore in last week as the new transportation and communications secretary Pantaleon "Bebot" Alvarez, who at 43, may be her youngest appointee.

Alvarez, who was congressman of the first district of Davao del Norte, was the senior assistant general manager of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and was also its chief operating officer from March 1995 to September 1997.

As senior assistant to then Naia general manager Francisco Atayde, he was in charge of the airport's operations, finance and administration and security and emergency services.

Alvarez also implemented the Naia terminal 3 build-operate-transfer project.

He was assistant Naia GM for operations from February 1995 to January 1994 after serving as action officer for six months.

"Bebot is a workhorse and you can expect him to conduct frequent inspections of all the DOTC projects," said long-time friend and Davao del Norte (2nd district) Rep. Antonio "Tony Boy" Florendo.

Florendo added Alvarez was a "hands-on manager, a technocrat with a legal mind."

Alvarez, who finished his law degree at the Ateneo Law School in 1983, was in private practice before he worked for five years for the office of then senator Wigberto Tanada.

Alvarez contested a seat in the House of Representatives in 1992 but lost to Baltazar Sator.

"I never really thought of that as a setback. I looked at it as more of a challenge for me to work harder for the people," Alvarez told the INQUIRER.

In 1998, Alvarez returned to politics and joined the newly-formed Reporma party under then presidential candidate Renato de Villa.

On his second try, Alvarez beat two other candidates, Shirley Aala and Pedro San Jose, to land a seat in the 11th Congress.

Alvarez said his first priority in the DOTC would be to ensure "the modernization of the transportation and communications infrastructure in the country."

"I would really want that Naia 3, a project where I worked as chair of the PBAC (public bid and awards committee), would be completed under my term," he said.

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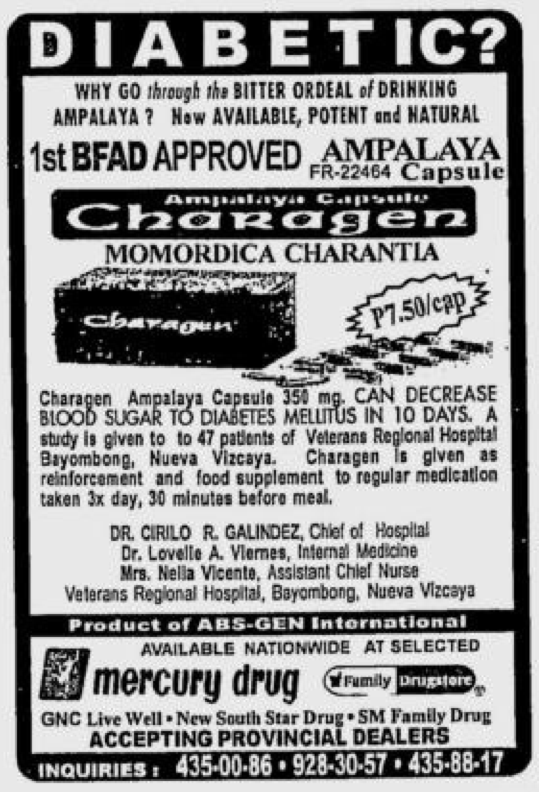
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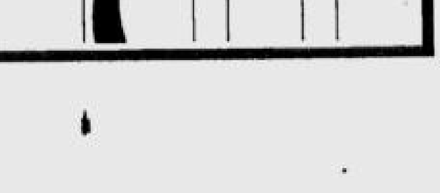

Palace OKd duty-free import of Maceda cars

By D. Z. Pazzibugan

FORMER President Joseph Estrada had approved the request of former ambassador to Washington, Ernesto Maceda to bring in tax-free three luxury cars (out of the four he originally wanted to import), documents showed.

In a memo dated Jan. 5—or two weeks before Estrada was ousted by the second People Power revolt—Malacañang authorized the "tax-free release" of Maceda's 2000 Mercedez Benz S500 and of two 2001 BMW BX5 listed under the name of his "foreign affairs advisers," Rolleo Ignacio and Patricia Porras.

Maceda had wanted to bring in another luxury car, a 2000 Toyota SUV, but the tax-exemption privilege granted to diplomats allows them to bring in only one vehicle tax-free.

As far as officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs knew, however, the importation did not push through because of the sudden change in leadership.

Car dealers said a 2000 Mercedez Benz S500 was worth around P3.9 million ($78,000), a 2001 BMW BX5 around P3 million ($60,000), and a 2000 Toyota SUV around P2.6 million ($52,000).

Despite Malacañang's approval, however, DFA officials seriously doubted whether Maceda could legally avoid paying taxes for the luxury cars.

One of the major hitches for Maceda is the provision of the Foreign Service Act imposing a price limit on the vehicles that its diplomats abroad can bring in without paying taxes.

Diplomats under the category of chiefs of mission and career ministers—to which Maceda and his two advisers belong—are allowed to import tax-free a car with a maximum price of $36,000; foreign service officers, $30,000; and embassy staff and employees, $22,000.

Since the amount of the three luxury cars that Maceda wanted to import exceed the price limit, he would have to pay taxes for the excess amount, a DFA official said.

But in his Jan. 5 memo, then acting Executive Secretary Ramon Cardenas did not mention this hitch.

"This office hereby authorizes the duty and tax-free release of the afore-described motor vehicles, subject to the submission of the necessary import documents, to compliance with the prior registration requirements and other pertinent rules and regulations," the memo read.

Cardenas was apparently referring to another provision of the Foreign Service Act that states that vehicles to be imported tax-free by diplomats should be registered under their name at least six months prior to their last day in office.

Records of the DFA, however, showed that only Maceda complied with the six-month registration requirement. His two advisers did not.

DFA insiders said Maceda could have only used his two advisers' names to be able to import additional luxury cars tax-free.

Former Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon Jr. had endorsed on Dec. 7 Maceda's request for Estrada's approval.

But at the same time he informed Malacañang that Maceda and his two advisers were not yet entitled to the tax exemption privilege since they have not stayed the required minimum of two years in their foreign post.

The Jan. 5 Malacañang memo came in the wake of a Jan. 3 memo prepared by former Finance Secretary Jose Pardo through director IV James Roldan.

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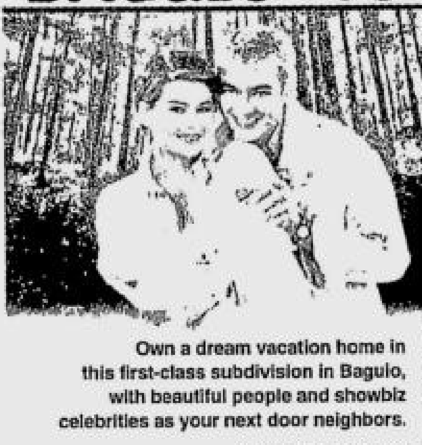

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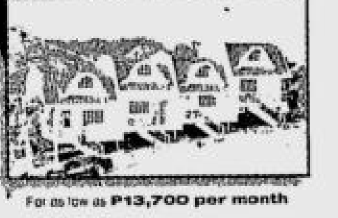

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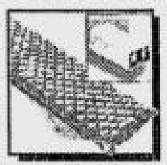

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US Embassy: Sooner or later he'll be extradited

By Dona Pazzibugan

US EMBASSY spokesperson Tom Skipper said the United States expected the Philippine government to act on its request for the extradition of busi-nessman Mark Jimenez, who has agreed to testify against ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Skipper said Washington could not do anything if the DOJ decided to use Jimenez in a judicial case.

But he said the expected delay in Jimenez's extradition to the United States would not affect the extradition request.

"I don't think it (Jimenez testifying) will matter. It doesn't change our extradition request, which remains valid. We expect it will move accordingly. We expect that sooner or later he'll be extradited to face charges (in the United States)," Skipper said in an interview.

Jimenez was indicted in Florida in 1999 for alleged tax evasion, mail fraud and illegal campaign contributions to the US Democratic Party.

Skipper said his government was willing to wait. "We're prepared to wait as long as it takes."

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said a testimony by Jimenez in what was likely a long-drawn-out case against Estrada would further delay his extradition to the United States.

Perez indicated that he preferred that Jimenez testify first against Estrada before he is extradited.

"The need now for him is to testify. After this probably we can send him to the United States, or we can have a deposition so that we can perpetuate his testimony and later have him extradited," Perez told reporters.

But he said the DOJ would not block Jimenez's eventual extradition.

Atong Ang turns back on Erap

(From page A1)

The source said Ang, a proponent of the controversial Bingo 2-Ball which sought to replace "jueteng," sent feelers to the Department of Justice only "this week" after the government threatened to cancel his passport.

"He was able to leave the country but he would have a hard time travelling once his passport is cancelled," the source said.

It was Ang who allegedly handed over the P130 million in cash from tobacco taxes to Estrada at the former President's home on Polk Street in Greenhills, San Juan.

Government officials, however, are skeptical about Ang's offer. They want to know what he can offer in the criminal cases against Estrada.

"The Department of Justice still has to evaluate what he (Ang) can offer. Under the Witness Protection Program, only the ones who are least guilty can be taken in. Some think that Ang is guilty," the source said.

Government issued a hold-departure order against Ang on Jan. 23 but by that time, the businessman had already left the country.

He fled on a Cathay Pacific flight bound for Hong Kong on Jan. 20, the same day that Estrada stepped down.

At the Department of Justice, Perez confirmed that for the past few days, government lawyers had been interviewing Jimenez, who revealed what he knew about the alleged illegal activities of Estrada and his family.

Perez said Jimenez, who himself is being linked to various shady deals during the Estrada administration, had furnished state prosecutors various "documents and checks" confirming, among other things, that Estrada owned shares in the controversial gaming firm BW Resources Corp.

BW Resources, a losing firm in which another Estrada friend, Dante Tan is a key shareholder, saw its shares soar more than 5,000 percent during an eight-month period ending in October 1999.

If the new administration decided to prosecute Estrada, Jimenez would testify that Estrada was "involved in the manipulation of the stock market" in 1999, Perez said.

Tan and two other people were indicted last month for manipulating BW share price. The justice department is expected to widen its indictments to include other shareholders and brokers.

JIMENEZ: Buying time

ANG: Feelers from Hong Kong

Earlier in January, former Finance Secretary Edgardo Espiritu testified before the impeachment trial that Estrada had told him in confidence that he made large amounts of money through BW Resources.

Jimenez also said that Estrada owned the "Jose Velarde" account with Equitable PCI Bank.

Perez said Jimenez had extensive knowledge of nearly all the irregular transactions entered into by Estrada.

"We have enough evidence to prove the guilt of Estrada and his family," he said.

Jimenez decided to testify to emphasize he was not involved in any crime, Perez said.

DOJ lawyers are expected to finish Jimenez's affidavit by Thursday, according to Perez.

Jimenez belonged to Estrada's innermost circle of friends and was said to be a member of the ousted ruler's "midnight Cabinet," a group of close associates who joined Estráda in late-night drinking sessions in Malacañang and other places.

The justice secretary disclosed that lawyer Mario Bautista, who handled the direct testimony of Equitable-PCI Bank senior vice president Clarissa Ocampo, the prosecution's surprise witness in the Senate impeachment trial of Estrada, represented Jimenez.

Ocampo had testified that Estrada was Jose Velarde, whom the House prosecutors claimed owned a P3.3-billion account with Equitable.

Perez said Jimenez also provided information on other alleged wrongdoing not related to the charges against Estrada pending before the Office of the Ombudsman.

But he said the other pieces of information could form the basis for another case against Estrada.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto is investigating Estrada for alleged plunder, misuse of funds, anti-graft law violations, perjury, bribery and possession of unexplained wealth—charges that emanated mostly from the former President's impeachment trial.

Desierto said Jimenez's decision to testify would considerably strengthen the criminal cases against Estrada.

Eduardo de los Angeles, a private prosecutor helping in the cases against Estrada, said Jimenez could be able to provide additional details on other transactions.

"It was reported that there were two big transactions that he brokered and that big sums of money were given as commissions. We would be able to trace in what banks these commissions were deposited," De los Angeles said.

"Here, he would be able to help if he could testify to whom he gave the commissions," he added.

Witness protection

Jimenez has already been put under guard, said Perez, suggesting the witness has received threatening calls.

Perez said he initially did not identify Jimenez to protect him.

"There were calls and suspicious cars passing by so I had him secured by the forces under the control of the Department of Justice," Perez told radio station dzMM.

Jimenez's decision to testify would not affect pending criminal allegations against him in the United States.

The United States asked the Philippine government in 1999 to extradite Jimenez on charges of tax evasion, wire fraud, conspiracy, giving false statements and illegal campaign contributions to former President Bill Clinton.

In exchange for Jimenez's testimony, Manila would ask the US government to give it "more time" to secure his deposition before pursuing an extradition case, Perez said.

He confirmed that Serapio had indicated that he was willing to testify against Estrada.

Perez said he was contacted by a lawyer-friend of Serapio's who said Serapio was willing to divulge information on the charges against Estrada.

But Perez, who was Serapio's professor at the Ateneo law school, said he had serious doubts about Serapio's testifying since he would be violating the rule on lawyer-client relationship, a ground for disbarment.

"I really doubt it because he is a lawyer of Estrada. Maybe he could give us some information," Perez said.

Never too late

Former President Fidel V. Ramos hailed the decision of Jimenez and Serapio to testify against Estrada.

"All of these efforts and initiatives to come out with the truth on the practice of cronyism during the last two and a half years augurs well for the government," he told reporters at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport upon his return from the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland.

"I'm happy that he's made the decision. What took him so long?" he said when asked about the decision of Jimenez to testify against Estrada.

Ramos quickly doused speculations that Jimenez and Serapio made the belated turnaround to deodorize their tarnished image.

"It's never too late to correct a wrong, if indeed there was a wrong committed," he said.

Ramos, who attended the WEF as representative of President Macapagal-Arroyo, said world leaders were expecting the new administration to adopt a policy of good governance.

"The world community expects the Philippines to pursue a more effective program of good governance which will lead to a better appreciation of our prospects, assets and capabilities, and which therefore, should bring back the Philippines the economic momentum that we enjoyed from 1995 to 1998," he said.

Ang's shady past

The Citizens' Action Against Crime, headed by Teresita Ang Sy, early this month accused Ang of having been involved in kidnapping cases, particularly the abduction of a member of the Sy family—owners of the Liana's supermarket chain.

He had also been named as a respondent in some of the cases filed with the Office of the Ombudsman.

One case stemmed from the allegation of former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson that Ang handed Estrada P130 million in cash from the tobacco excise tax on Aug. 28, 1998.

It was used as a basis for the issuance of the hold-departure order against him.

Reports about Estrada's friends testifying against him prompted one of the private prosecutors yesterday to warn the government against making hasty decisions.

"We should first determine if we need their testimony. If we think that what he would be saying could be covered by other pieces of evidence, our position is that he should not be made to testify because as he could be given immunity (from suits)," said lawyer Ricardo Nepomuceno, head of a group of private prosecutors.

"As much as possible, we don't want them to gain immunity because it's possible that there may be cases against them too," Nepomuceno said. *With reports from TJ Burgonio and AFP*

JV asks Erap's friends: Please, don't abandon my father

(From page A1)

Ejercito said his father's associates were being subjected to threats and harassment to compel them to provide damaging testimony against Estrada.

He said he would not be surprised if Estrada's associates would testify against his father because they themselves faced criminal prosecution.

"That has been done before by (former Finance Secretary Ed) Espiritu," Ejercito said, referring to Espiritu's damaging testimony against Estrada before the Senate impeachment court early last month.

After Espiritu's testimony, Estrada's defenders pointed out that Espiritu's son was under investigation by the Department of Justice.

"They're only human. Besides you can count people who are willing to lay down their lives for a friend," Ejercito said. "But I hope they only say what is true."

Referring to Jimenez, Ejercito said: "I cannot blame him. He can say anything especially if there is that extradition case against him."

Reading from a prepared statement, Ejercito said:

"They harass President Estrada and those associated with him—through threats of cases of plunder, which are non-bailable, and which would result in immediate incarceration of those of who do not bend to their demands."

Ejercito said that Serapio and Tan as well as their families were receiving threats and that suspicious-looking characters had reportedly been seen near their homes and workplaces.

Ejercito said that aside from Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, the new administration "will continue to use criminals and jueteng/gambling lords, even fugitives from justice, to smear President Estrada."

The phrase "fugitive from justice" was obviously intended for Jimenez whom the US government wants extradited for crimes ranging from mail fraud to illegal campaign contributions to the Democratic Party.

Ejercito said his family would be concentrating on the defense of Estrada and relatives who may be indicted in the courts.

"We'll just be here and face the music," Ejercito said, stressing that they will not go into exile as suggested by certain quarters.

Ejercito said they had learned from the experience of the Marcos family who was forced into exile following the 1986 Edsa revolt.

"We will answer the charges. We won't do what the Marcoses did when in their absence from the country, the government did all they could against them. We will be here to answer them," he said.

JV EJERCITO at a press conference to announce the convention today of his father's political party, Partido ng Masang Pilipino. REUTERS

Ejercito said that "all kinds of dirt have been hurled at the President and his family, and most of them are fabricated and baseless. Conviction by innuendo and publicity has become the rule of the day."

He said the lawyers who represented Estrada in the impeachment trial might be the same counsels who will handle the cases against his father.

Ejercito was unhappy about government efforts to freeze family assets and businesses because of claims they came from stolen money. He said they were established with "blood, sweat and tears."

Erap made ₱15-B pile in 2 years–lawyers

(From page A1)

account, he said.

The unexplained wealth came "from bribes and kickbacks and some other sources we still don't know about," De los Angeles said. "You can see the (former) President using fictitious names and banks to launder money."

Estrada took office in June 1998 and deposited millions of pesos at Equitable Bank the following August, De los Angeles said.

In his 1999 Statement of Assets and Liabilities, the former film actor declared a net worth of only P35 million.

De los Angeles said some of the accounts had been closed and related bank documents shredded.

"But we still have enough documents to show the existence of the accounts," he said.

De los Angeles and the other private prosecutors said they had put together a paper trail proving their allegations and would release details of their investigation by next week.

Lawyer Arno Sanidad said Estrada could face a string of criminal charges, ranging from corruption to plunder that is punishable by death if the amount involved exceeds P50 million:

Lawyer Simeon Marcelo, another private prosecutor, said his group had built a strong case against Estrada in connection with the P130-million tobacco tax kickback and the P400 million in "jueteng" payoffs he allegedly pocketed.

Mansions

The National Bureau of Investigation has also stepped up its probe into the luxurious mansions that Estrada allegedly constructed for himself and his mistresses.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said six top officials of his agency had been able to get more information about the mansions since Estrada was toppled in a military-backed popular uprising on Jan. 20.

"The environment is different now, so there is a better chance they will get a breakthrough," he said in a radio interview.

"They have already gathered the titles, the [names of the] corporations, the people behind the corporations, the syndicate, but the principals behind this, that is one of the things they are still looking into," Wycoco said.

Allegations about the secret bank accounts, payoffs, kickbacks and mansions formed part of the Articles of Impeachment that the House of Representatives approved against Estrada.

The Senate impeachment trial, however, bogged down after pro-Estrada senators barred House prosecutors access to bank records pertaining to Estrada's alleged P3.2-billion account at Equitable PCI Bank.

The suppression of the evidence sparked Edsa People Power II that ousted Estrada and paved the way for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's assumption of the presidency.

Since then, the impeachment proceedings have been turned into a criminal investigation and Estrada has been barred from leaving the country.

Filing of cases

Nepomuceno said that under the law, charges of ill-gotten wealth against Estrada could only be filed with the Office of the Ombudsman after the May elections.

But he said Ombudsman Aniano Desierto could now start issuing subpoenas for documents.

"There is nothing to prevent him (Desierto) from consolidating the evidence. The private prosecutors can already ask him to subpoena records and feed him information so that when the time comes for him to file the case with the Sandiganbayan, there would be no further delay," Nepomuceno said.

The private prosecutors, some from big law firms, were hired by nongovernment organizations that signed the original impeachment complaint.

The prosecutors said the NGOs had wanted them to pursue the cases against Estrada.

The Concerned Lawyers for Moral and Effective Leadership (Clamor) said it would ask the Sandiganbayan to hold televised hearings on the case similar to the Senate impeachment trial.

"Vigilance is especially needed in this case because we do not want another 'second envelope' incident to happen," said lawyer Dennis Funa, Clamor head convenor.

"This time it is for real. Because here the penalty will either be death by lethal injection or life imprisonment, and not just removal from office," he said. *With reports from AP and AFP*

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Gloria . . .

(From page A1)

But the aide, Rene Velasco, backtracked later and attributed the catty quote to someone else.

At an academic forum, Velasco at first recalled how Ms Macapagal, accompanied by a group of her assistants, inspected the Presidential Residence Monday last week to prepare for her family's move to its new official address.

In Joseph Estrada's vacated bedroom, there was a "big bed" and "three tables used for mahjong," Velasco, a University of the Philippines professor, volunteered during the round-table forum of UP faculty members and students.

He said Ms Macapagal, when asked if she and First Spouse Mike Arroyo planned to use the same room and the same bed, declined and said in jest: "*Kung sinu-sino na ang natulog diyan.*"

But Velasco, who called himself the President's adviser on policies, retracted his candid disclosure when a reporter asked him after the forum to elaborate on the quote.

He claimed that the remark had not come from Ms Macapagal herself but from a companion during the tour of the house.

Ms Macapagal "chose the smallest room" in the Presidential Residence "to bring back the feel of her happiest days with her father," Velasco said.

In earlier reports, the President said she and her husband had chosen to occupy the same room she had used as a child during the presidency of her late father Diosdado Macapagal.

Ms Macapagal was also "disappointed" to see how her predecessor had turned rooms used by former President Fidel Ramos and by her own father into storage rooms for old gifts and dusty plaques. "*Ginawang tambakan* (It was made a storage area)," Velasco said.

He said the sight struck Ms Macapagal as an indication that the previous tenants "apparently (had) no respect for history," Velasco, who teaches political science, told his audience.

Ermita pursuing peace with Moros in Cotabato

By Edwin O. Fernandez
PDI Mindanao Bureau

COTABATO CITY—A possible ceasefire with Moro secessionist rebels is one of the matters to be threshed out by Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Presidential Assistant for Southern Mindanao Jesus Dureza who are to fly here today following a directive from President Macapagal-Arroyo to resume negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Malacañang plans to declare a temporary suspension of military operations against the MILF to convince the Moro rebels to return to the negotiating table, Ermita said.

"The President's directive is clear—pursue and reconstruct the peace process with the MILF," Ermita said in a radio interview over dxMS yesterday.

Ermita and Dureza will be meeting with military and local government officials, peace advocacy groups, relief workers and evacuees.

Ermita said he would sit down with military officials in Central Mindanao "to get their insights on whether we can consider a cessation of hostilities."

"Hopefully, it would lead to a lasting and permanent ceasefire," he said.

While here, Ermita is also expected to announce the names of the new membership of the government peace panel.

Ermita's statements were warmly received by the MILF, which earlier also welcomed the announcement of the resumption of peace talks.

MILF spokesman Eid Kabalu said the rebels can immediately reconstitute their peace panel which it disbanded in August last year, following ousted President Joseph Estrada's announcement of an "all-out war policy."

Ermita, a last-termer congressman from Batangas and former Armed Forces vice chief of staff, was vice chair of the government peace panel that negotiated a peace agreement with the main Muslim-led insurgency, the Moro National Liberation Front, between 1993 and 1996.

Mindanao's peace advocacy groups had repeatedly called for a ceasefire to allow for the resumption of the peace talks and the return of residents who had been forced to evacuate their war-torn villages.

A ceasefire declaration would be the cue for thousands of evacuees, now housed in makeshift evacuation centers, to safely return to their villages.

Several evacuees who returned to their villages went back to the evacuation centers because of continued skirmishes between the MILF and government troops.

"The MILF and the Muslims desire peace in their homeland more than anybody else," Kabalu said in Filipino in reaction to Ermita's statement.

Ermita and Dureza will also be meeting with peace advocacy groups and looking into the situation of refugees.

According to Dureza, the first instructions that he received from President Macapagal was to visit the war-ravaged areas in Central Mindanao and be briefed by development and relief workers.

Dureza, who will be flying in from his base in Davao City, has met with officials of Tabang Mindanaw, one of the biggest private groups assisting evacuees in Central Mindanao. He was told the group was still extending assistance to a total of 35,000 evacuees in Maguindanao and North Cotabato.

At least 2,000 families remain in evacuation centers or are staying with relatives in Marawi City.

Secretary Paul Dominguez, presidential adviser for regional development, has said the "reconstructed" peace process would be based on a framework of finding a "final political solution" to the insurgency in Mindanao. He said it will include important components that will facilitate the rehabilitation of areas destroyed by Estrada's all-out war policy. *With reports from Carolyn O. Arguillas and Jowel F. Canuday*

Gov't accords with insurgents reviewed

ACTING Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday said the new administration has started to review some of the actions made by the Estrada administration as it prepares to pave the way for the resumption of peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the National Democratic Front.

Ermita said the Department of Justice is reviewing the warrants of arrest issued by the Estrada administration against the MILF leaders who were charged in connection with the deadly Dec.30 bombings in Metro Manila.

"The DOJ is reviewing that to find out if there is basis for the warrants of arrest," he told reporters after attending the Cabinet meeting in Malacañang.

If there will be a DOJ recommendation that the warrants of arrests should be withdrawn, then they would do so and continue efforts to start negotiations with the MILF, Ermita said.

Likewise, to be reviewed are the agreements made by the previous administration, particularly the peace deal reached between the government and the communist Alex Boncayao Brigade that was brokered by former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara last year.

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YOLANDA S. ROBLEDO

10 Abu Sayyaf rebels slain in Basilan clash

JOLO, Sulu—Ten Muslim extremist kidnappers and one soldier were slain and four soldiers were wounded in a clash here amid a campaign to rescue an American hostage, military spokesperson said Tuesday.

A spokesperson for the Abu Sayyaf group holding Oakland resident Jeffrey Schilling, 25, and Filipino hostage Roland Ullah called for negotiations with the new government of President Macapagal-Arroyo, but military spokespersons rejected the overtures.

Ten Abu Sayyaf members and a soldier were killed and four Army soldiers, including a lieutenant were wounded in a two-hour clash near the Jolo town of Parang, said regional military spokesperson Col. Fredesvindo Covarrubias.

It was not known if the two hostages were with the rebel unit in the firefight.

Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya called a number of radio stations in nearby Zamboanga city as well as Manila on Tuesday and warned that Schilling, a Muslim convert, was unwell.

"He is suffering because he has lost his contact lenses," Sabaya said. "He vomits often."

He added: "We want to hold peace talks with the new government through Congressman Joker Arroyo."

The previous administration of Joseph Estrada launched military operations against the Abu Sayyaf in Jolo in mid-September to end a kidnapping crisis which snared dozens of hostages, including western tourists and journalists, from nearby Malaysian island resorts and Jolo.

The operations sprung two Frenchmen, three Malaysians and a group of Filipino Christian preachers. But the military have had no luck with Schilling as well as with Ullah, a Filipino dive master seized in the Malaysian resort of Sipadan nine months ago.

Estrada was toppled in a military-backed popular uprising 10 days ago.

"We trust the administration of President (Gloria) Arroyo. We may stop our kidnapping activities and work for peace in our province" if the talks go well, Sabaya said. *AFP*

3 MILF rebels killed

ZAMBOANGA CITY—At least three Muslim rebels were killed in clashes between government troops and Muslim separatist rebels in Sultan Kudarat, the military said here yesterday.

Soldiers backed by government militias were patrolling the village of Lumibao in Sultan Kudarat province Monday when guerrillas of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front attacked, triggering a 40-minute firefight, according to Col. Fredesvindo Covarrubias, spokesman for the army's southern command headquarters here. *AFP*

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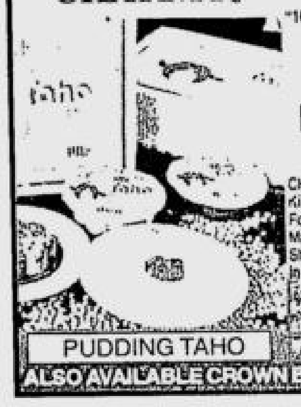

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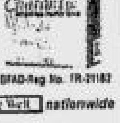

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Gloria wants special powers to juggle funds

VAL HANDUMON

COCO TASK FORCE

President Macapagal-Arroyo presides over yesterday's meeting of the multisectoral task force on the coconut levy in Malacañang to resolve the multibillion-peso controversy. In attendance are Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo, Rep. Wigberto Tañada, chief presidential legal counsel Avelino Cruz, Pehm Grafilo, Efren Villasenor, Francis Lucas, Vicente Jayme, Jose Concepcion, Mario Ongkiko and Camilo Sabio.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has asked Senate President Aquilino Pimentel to give her special powers to realign the budget for 2001.

This was disclosed yesterday by Pimentel in his speech before the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, adding that the President's request was coursed through Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo.

The finance chief made the proposal because it appeared likely that Congress would not be able to approve the budget this year in its last four special sessions.

Congress adjourns on Feb. 8.

Pimentel confirmed it would be extremely difficult to pass the entire budget within the remaining session days.

Options

"Yesterday, I told Secretary Bert Romulo what the options are. He suggested that perhaps we should invest the President with powers to realign provisions of the budget," Pimentel said.

The Estrada administration had proposed a budget of P725 billion for this year. It pegged expenditures at P623 billion and projected revenues at P578 billion.

The budget deficit for this year was calculated by Romulo to hit a worst-case level of P145 billion as compared to the actual budget gap of P136.1 billion last year.

"We will tell you what the plans are if the budget is not approved. Meantime, we wait," Pimentel quoted Romulo as saying.

Pimentel said the special powers being sought by the President were not realistic.

"The Constitution may not allow shotgun permission even by law allowing the President to realign items in the budget whichever way she wants to do it," he said.

'On wrong foot'

Pimentel, one of 12 senators in contention for the post of vice president, said he did not want President Macapagal to start "on the wrong foot."

"The last thing she needs at this point are legal challenges to the positions she wants to take in relation to the development of the nation," said Pimentel.

Still, he said, he told Romulo to formalize his request to the Senate. "And we would do our level best to support the efforts of her administration to retool the budget to suit her priorities according to the Constitution."

Pimentel proposed the alternative of splitting the budget into "two portions." The first portion, he said, could cover the P2.5-billion expenditures for the May elections, which had been approved Monday night.

He said the rest of the proposed expenditures could be approved by Congress when it convened in July 2001.

"The deferment would be to the advantage of the Macapagal administration as the President can introduce the priorities she wants funded in the budget," he pointed out.

If the administration couldn't wait, he added, it could ask Congress to hold special sessions. But he said that could be difficult to do as legislators would be busy during the campaign period.

Pimentel explained that in the event Congress failed to pass the GAA in any given year, the previous year's budget would be re-enacted.

Last year's budget amounted to P625 billion. *Clarissa Batino*

JV Ongpin Awards opens nomination book

THE CENTER for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR) is now accepting nominations for the 12th Jaime V. Ongpin Awards for Investigative Journalism. Investigative stories published in print media in the year 2000 are eligible for the Awards.

The Awards pay tribute to the role the late businessman Jaime V. Ongpin played in promoting press freedom in the latter years of Marcos rule. Ten finalists at most are chosen from among the nominees. Three winners are in turn chosen from among the 10.

The first prize winner receives a plaque, P50,000, and the Marshall McLuhan Prize from the Canadian Embassy, which consists of a media familiarization tour of Canada. The second and third prize winners receive a plaque each and P25,000 and P12,500 respectively. All other finalists receive a plaque and P5,000 each.

The Awards were launched in 1990 by the JVO Institute of Business and Government (JVO-IBG) in coordination with the CMFR, which also serves as the administrative and technical secretariat for the Awards. The Canadian Embassy has offered the Marshall McLuhan Prize since 1997.

The Awards promote special skills in reporting like research, intensive investigation and inquiry, and the corroboration of facts to ensure the validity of the journalist's findings.

An independent scan of last year's investigative articles published in 12 Metro Manila broadsheets is already being undertaken by CMFR. Newspaper publishers and editors are also invited to nominate their candidates for the Awards.

Individual journalists may also submit articles. Entry forms for the 2000 Jaime V. Ongpin Awards for Investigative Journalism may be obtained at the office of the CMFR, 2/F Ateneo Professional Schools, 130 H.V. de la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. Forms may be picked up at the CMFR from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Mass for Dacer

A MASS will be held at the Saint Jude Church near Malacañang on Saturday which will be attended by the family, relatives and close friends of missing public relations executive Salvador "Bubby" Dacer.

Father Bel San Luis will officiate the Mass at exactly 5 p.m.

Relatives and friends are expected to attend the gathering to offer prayer for the safe recovery of Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito.

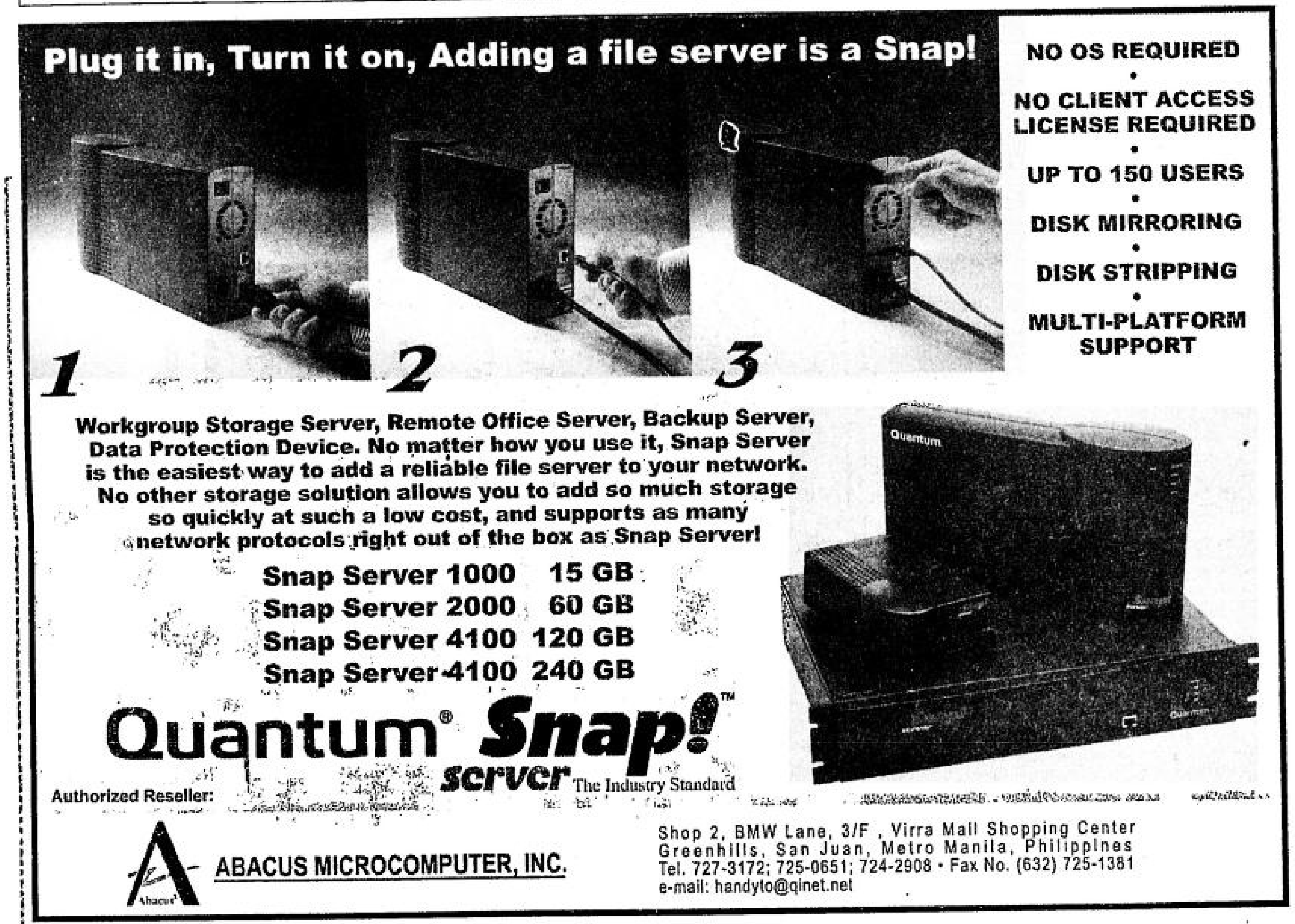
Dacer and Corbito disappeared on Nov. 24, while he was about to report to his office at the Manila Hotel in Manila.

Medical convention Feb. 5-7

ARTHEROSCLEROSIS, a disseminated and diffused disease process characterized by the thickening of the walls or arteries, will take centerstage during the 7th joint annual convention of the The Philippine Society of Hypertension (PSH) and the Philippine Lipid Society (PLS).

According to overall convention chair, Dr. Esperanza Cabral, the Feb. 5 to 7 convention at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City will feature as theme "Conquering Atherosclerosis: A Multi Specialty Approach."

"Since control of artherosclerosis is a critical problem requiring a panoramic approach rather than fragmented microscopic strategies, the involvement of various internal medicine specialists, such as cardiologists, endocrinologists, nephrologists and even generalists will lead to a common objective and thus improve and prolong the patients' quality of life," said noted cardiologists Dr. Rody G. Sy, president of PLS and Dr. Ramon F. Abarquez Jr., president PSH.



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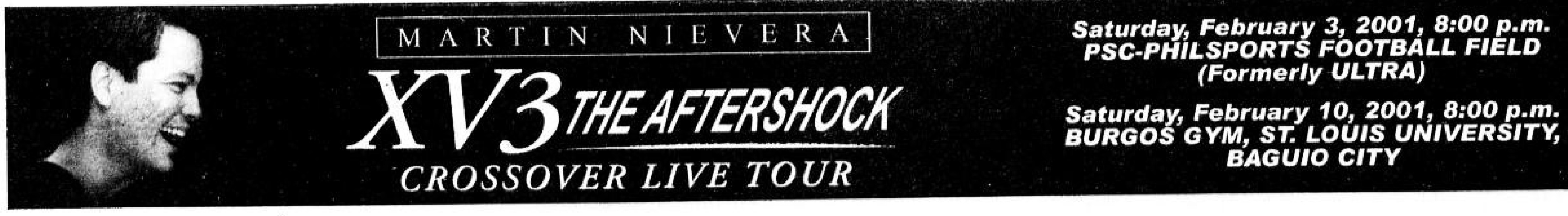

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DOJ chief eyes release of 77 political detainees

JUSTICE officials said yesterday they have urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to release 77 of 250 political prisoners in a gesture the government hopes will spur resumption of peace talks with two rebel groups.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said the prisoners could be freed this week if the President approves his department's recommendation.

He said the cases of the other prisoners are under review but added that two left-wing radicals, convicted in the 1991 killing of a US Col. James Rowe were not being considered.

Relatives of detainees protested Monday in front of the justice department, prompting the government to immediately review the cases, Perez said.

Officials in past administrations have said all political detainees, mostly suspected communist guerrillas, have been freed since the 1986 downfall of dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Left-wing groups, however, say such detainees continue to languish in jails nationwide after they were slapped with common criminal charges—a trick they claim was used to keep dissenters behind bars.

"Political prisoners are ordinary men and women with a noble cause. They are not criminals as pictured by past administrations to hide the reality of political persecution," said one group, Karapatan.

"We caution the new president never to commit the same grave crimes of persecution and political repression of past administrations," it said in a statement.

The group said about 60 percent of the political prisoners were farmers jailed for their struggle to own land to till. The detainees also include 10 women and 11 minors, and there have been cases of illegal arrests and torture, Karapatan said.

The group specifically demanded the release of Donato Continente and Juanito Itaas, who were convicted in the killing of Rowe, who had coordinated US military support to the Philippines.

That demand is likely to put Ms Macapagal's administration, which has reached out to all groups for support, in a bind. In the past, US officials have opposed steps to free the two men.

Left-wing groups played an important role in the massive protests that ousted President Joseph Estrada on Jan. 20 and swept Ms Macapagal to power.

One of her first orders was to pursue resumption of peace talks with communist guerrillas and Muslim rebels, who have welcomed the initiative but continue to undertake attacks against government and military targets.

Former Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado said two main insurgent groups—the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which is fighting for Islamic independence in the southern Philippines, and the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front—would be motivated to resume talks if Ms Macapagal ordered the release of the prisoners. *AP*

Petition vs GMA a 'prank'

By Jerome Aning

DISMISSING it as "a prank that amuses no one," the militant labor group Kilusang Mayo Uno yesterday called on the Supreme Court to "flatly and immediately" shoot down former Marcos lawyer Oliver Lozano's petition seeking the annulment of President Macapagal-Arroyo's accession to power.

KMU chair Crispin Beltran branded Lozano a "mischief-maker" and assailed the lawyer's motion asking the tribunal to declare ousted President Joseph Estrada as merely on leave.

In his petition, Lozano contended that Estrada did not officially resign, making Ms Macapagal's presidency void.

Beltran said it was common knowledge, even to children, that Mr. Estrada was kicked out by People Power II.

"Estrada left Malacañang when the people marched toward the Palace to usher him out," he said. "He is not a president on leave; he is the president who left because he was ousted."

The KMU leader said the Supreme Court "should not waste any time on weighing the merits of Lozano's petition, because there aren't any."

He described Lozano's petition as a "diversionary tactic" meant to buy more time for the ex-president.

"The demand for Estrada's prosecution and arrest still stands and people's groups are more than ever determined to see him behind bars and his ill-gotten wealth seized and returned to the people," Beltran said.

He added that Lozano might be trying to distract the Macapagal administration from pursuing these ends by filing "this junk petition."

The KMU leader also reproached Ms Macapagal for being "too slow and indecisive" in prosecuting Estrada.

"Justice is being delayed," he said, "and Estrada and his group of straggler-supporters are slowly getting back the strength to recover."

He concluded: "No forgiveness, no exile for Estrada. The place for him is behind bars."

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Gringo denies plotting vs Gloria, explains vote

By Alcuin Papa

SEN. Gregorio Honasan yesterday denied yet again he was involved in attempts to overthrow the Macapagal administration.

In a statement sent to media, Honasan said comments and accusations implicating him in an attempt to destabilize the government were "divisive."

"Once again, I vehemently deny the vicious rumors about my participation in any planned attempt to overthrow the current (Macapagal)government through extra-constitutional means. Comments such as these are divisive and will not, in any way, contribute to the healing of this nation," Honasan said.

He added that the nation faces "greater challenges ahead" as "we must buckle down to work at once."

Honasan also took pains to defend his vote not to open the controversial second envelope on Estrada reported P3.3 billion bank accounts, saying his vote was meant to uphold the Constitution and due process.

"The President must be tried based on the evidence admitted in the(impeachment) trial and not on the ones excluded therefrom but presented to media and the public at large," Honasan stressed.

On the other hand, if the majority thinks his "principled vote is a failure to respond to the will of the people, then I sincerely apologize for the ongoing perception that my action suppressed the truth and justice was not served as demanded by the people."

Honasan went a step further. "I am sorry if I failed to heed their (the people's) call. After all, the voice of the people is the supreme law. Since the people have spoken, let it be."

The Senator also sought to dismiss the perception that he was only a "stooge" of Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile. "Our close association has not, in any way, affected or influenced any of my decisions."

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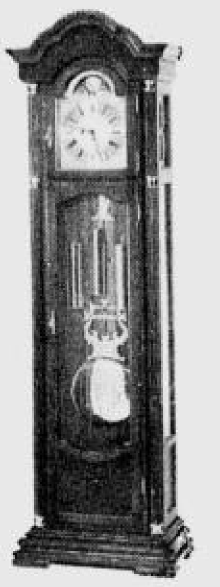
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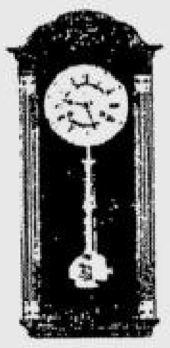
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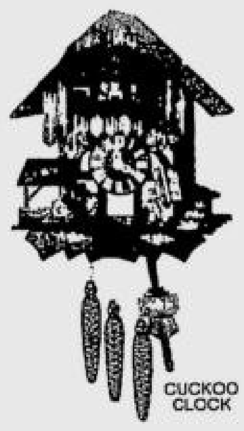
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OPINION

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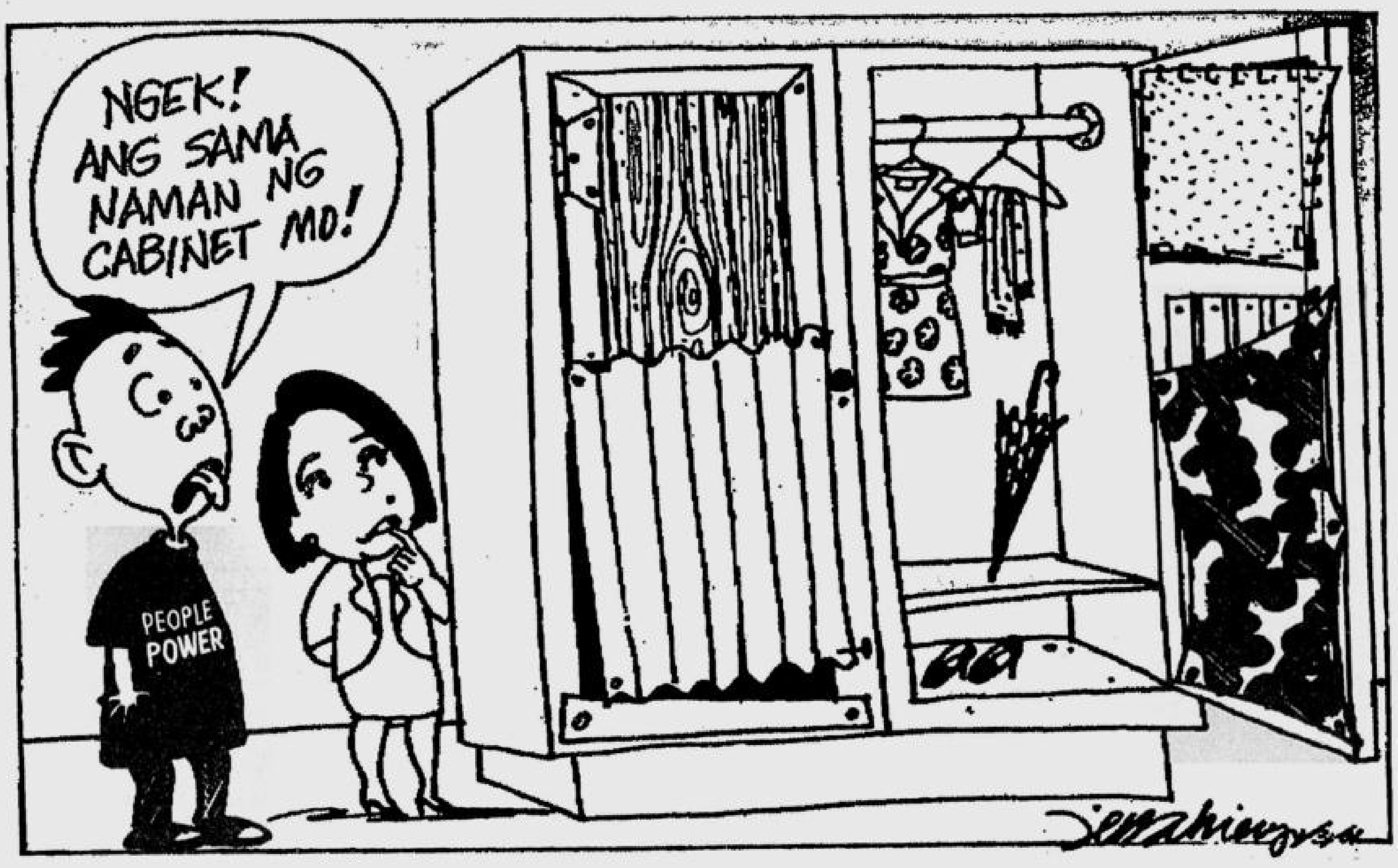
NGEK! ANG SAMA NAMAN NG CABINET MO!
PEOPLE POWER

The wrong man

EDITORIAL

LINDA Chavez, US President George W. Bush's first choice for labor secretary, gave up her nomination to the Cabinet when the media reported that she had taken into her home an illegal immigrant from Guatemala and paid her to do household chores. Harboring an illegal alien is considered a crime in the United States, but Chavez said she didn't know Marta Mercado's immigration status when she gave her a room in her house in the early 1990s. She said she helped Mercado out of charity and she would do the same thing even if she knew it would cost her a Cabinet job.

Bush said Chavez would have made a "fine Cabinet secretary" and expressed sadness over her inability to join his team. But neither he nor any of his advisers bothered to call her to say goodbye.

Retired Gen. Lisandro Abadia, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's original nominee as national security adviser, stands accused of a far more serious crime than sheltering an illegal alien. He has been charged with absconding with millions of pesos in military retirement funds when he was the chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and served concurrently as chair of the Retirement, Separation and Benefits System. But up to yesterday he tried to hang on to his post, even if it was causing a lot of embarrassment to the new administration. Ms Macapagal had to let him go.

Abadia's appointment created a crisis of sorts in the young administration when Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado, the only holdover from the Estrada Cabinet, suddenly resigned in protest. Mercado, who joined top military officials in defecting to the opposition on the eve of Joseph Estrada's departure from Malacañang, said he could not work with Abadia whose involvement in the RSBS scandal he himself had ordered investigated.

Abadia sought to fend off criticism about his appointment by saying he had been cleared by the Ombudsman. On Monday, Abadia even produced a certification from the deputy ombudsman for the military declaring that he was not among those recommended to be indicted for violation of the anti-graft law in connection with the pension fund mess. Mercado pointed out, however, that the Office of the Ombudsman cleared Abadia and other RSBS officials after agreeing with their lawyers that the RSBS was a private corporation and therefore the case was filed before the wrong investigating body. But this opinion of the Ombudsman is being challenged by Mercado before the Supreme Court.

Thus if Abadia is off the hook for now, it is only because the Ombudsman says it has no jurisdiction over the case. In other words, he is free on a technicality. He has not been cleared or exonerated of the charges by any court of law. There is always the possibility that he would still be haled before the Sandiganbayan or a civil court—and convicted.

With this shadow of suspicion hanging over Abadia's head, people were beginning to wonder why the President was keeping him as her national security adviser. There were reports that Executive Secretary Renato de Villa wanted his recommendee to hang on lest the administration be perceived to be spineless.

That is as stupid a reason as any for keeping an official in his post. If true, De Villa mistakes bull-headedness for decisiveness, hubris for political will. It is perfectly understandable that the Macapagal administration would make mistakes, given the very short notice it had to take over the reins of government. What would be intolerable is for it to persist in its error.

Abadia's appointment was obviously a mistake. He might not have been convicted of any crime, but the unsettled RSBS case was reason enough for the administration to junk him. In any administration, key officials are supposed to be above suspicion. More so in an administration that was catapulted to power on account of popular indignation over government corruption.

In her inaugural address, Ms Macapagal spoke about "leadership by example," improving moral standards in government and creating "fertile ground for true reform." Going by these "core beliefs," the serious questions about Abadia's honesty and integrity disqualified him from serving in the administration. Ms Macapagal must have finally realized that he had become a burden to her administration. She gave him the opportunity to save face and hailed as always an officer and a gentleman. But she did what needed to be done. Yesterday, she recalled Abadia's appointment.

Learn from the lessons of People Power I

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

EXILE was, in the old days, the favorite method of getting rid of a king or a pretender to the throne—if the winner did not want to chop his head off. It was effective then, when crossing the ocean took many months and the only means of communication was by mail or personal courier, which also took a very long time. But this is the age of the jet plane, the cell phone, fax machine and e-mail, when you can send messages from one country to another in a matter of seconds and fly from one continent to another in a matter of hours. So sending Erap into exile won't help much to prevent him and his followers from destabilizing the Macapagal administration.

As yesterday's INQUIRER editorial pointed out, Marcos was forced into exile in Hawaii after People Power I, but that did not prevent Marcos followers here from destabilizing the Aquino administration. Erap can very well do the same thing by remote control from wherever he would be exiled.

Better than exile, said the editorial, "is the immediate prosecution of Estrada. The government should charge him with a non-bailable offense like plunder and have him arrested and locked up in a maximum security detention cell. It should also file cases for the sequestration of his alleged ill-gotten wealth so that he can't use the money to finance coup attempts or other destabilization moves."

Among the gladiators of Imperial Rome whose daily business was to kill or be killed, there was a saying that goes, "he who hesitates is doomed." It meant that the gladiator who hesitates to deliver the coup de grâce to his fallen opponent ran the risk of having that opponent recover and kill him instead.

That was the mistake of Cory Aquino. She hesitated from quickly prosecuting the Marcoses and so she was nearly overthrown by them. And that would also be the mistake of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo if she hesitates to prosecute Erap due to a false feeling of magnanimity and national unity. As we can all see, Erap is still getting bad advice from supporters who still hope that he would recover power because they would be with him when he does.

As we are no longer in the age when chopping heads was acceptable in high society, the next best thing to do is to put Erap under lock and key in a cell where the only advice he would get would be from common Sigue-Sigue and OXO criminals. But we don't see any rush on the part of the new rulers to do that. All they seem to do is to issue press releases and hold victory parties. And perhaps think of ways to do it better then Erap and Marcos did during their time.

Let us learn from the lessons of People Power I. The Aquino and Ramos administrations hesitated from quickly prosecuting the Marcoses. So after relaxing in Hawaii, the Marcoses returned to the Philippines like conquering heroes, as arrogant and proud as ever. The Marcoses and Romualdezes are back in power in Ilocos Norte and Leyte. And the Imeldific herself is thinking of retaking Manila from Mayor Lito Atienza and ex-Mayor Alfredo Lim this May. Fifteen years after they were kicked out of the Philippines by People Power I, the Marcoses and Romualdezes are still making fools of the Filipinos. Fifteen years after People Power II, will Erap still be making fools of us?

Let us be like South Korea and Japan which did not hesitate to prosecute and punish their erring prime ministers. Only by doing so will we show future leaders that they cannot get away with it, that there is sure and merciless punishment waiting for any offender.

But what we are showing them and our children is the opposite, by our lenient treatment of the Marcoses, and by the very slow wheels of justice. We are now teaching them that the old saying "crime does not pay" is no longer true. We are showing them that crime does pay.

* * *

It is said that Erap has four favorite mistresses because a *manghuhula* had told him that the letters EZ in their names are good luck for him, as in Guia GomEZ, Laarni EnriquEZ, Joy MelendrEZ and Weng LopEZ. Thus, they were the ones to whom he gave luxury mansions and townhouses. The names of other mistresses like Nora Aunor (or Villamayor), Osorio, Murphy or Dungca did not have the good luck letters EZ, and so they got little.

That explains the dirty dancing made by Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta after the voting on the second envelope at the impeachment trial. Oreta—whom it is rumored has a crush on Erap—wanted to be a host in the TV dance show "Eezy Dancing," because it has the letters EZ. Erap may think she, Oreta, is good luck for him, and may throw a mansion or two her way.

But the *manghuhula* had made a mistake *pala* in reading her crystal ball. Instead of good luck, the crystal ball had said EZ was bad luck. And it was right. The Boracay and other mansions that Erap gave to his mistresses with the EZ started his downfall. And the "No" votes of Miss EEZy Dancer herself contributed to the anger of the people that launched People Power II and finally brought him down.

* * *

TODAY's Gloria joke:
Who are today's top show-biz stars?
Nora Aunor—Superstar
Vilma Santos—Star for All Seasons
Sharon Cuneta—Megastar
Maricel Soriano—Diamond Star
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo—Twinkle, twinkle little star.

Out of sync

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I DO not read Time Magazine as a rule—I find only its book and movie reviews to have reasonably intelligent things to say—and so did not see at once Anthony Spaeth's commentary on our People Power II. It was readers who brought it to my attention, via the e-mail, and begged me to say something about it.

What can I say? For sheer sententiousness and ignorance, it tops anything Time has turned out so far. The attitude is not unlike colonial rulers commenting on splendid little wars, or the lack of them, in some steamy, if somewhat exotic, banana republic. These lines say it all. "On the second night of that comic, two-day revolt (the one led by Arturo Tolentino shortly after Edsa I), I held a cocktail party for visiting family members. 'Afterward, we climbed into the car and toured the revolution. My family enjoyed roaming the fortified hotel..."

I'm glad we contributed to Spaeth and his family's entertainment. But I do not see why he should pass off his idylls as journalism, or why a magazine that claims to have some international standing should consent to it.

What is his argument basically? It is that People Power II was not a democratic exercise but a tyrannical one. It was mob rule. This is so for two reasons. One is that it was the product of a conspiracy. That, he says, is the most plausible explanation for what happened. Corazon Aquino, Jaime Cardinal Sin, Fidel Ramos and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo banded together and goaded their countrymen into toppling a leader they, or their genteel class, could not abide. Two is that it screwed the Constitution. Unlike People Power 1, which brought down a dictator, People Power II brought down a duly elected one. Indeed, an immensely popular one. Aquino and Sin, who kept invoking the Constitution to block Ramos from running again, didn't particularly mind breaking it to stop Erap from continuing to run the country.

The first is plain idiotic. Had Spaeth bothered to research his article, he would have found out that Aquino also plotted to get the US bases retained and called for people power to help her do it. All she lured to the Luneta was a crew of bedraggled conscripts, reminding the world of Marcos' pathetic *hakot* power when she was fighting him. Indeed, had Spaeth bothered to research his article, he would have found out that Cardinal Sin also plotted to bring down Juan Flavier's family planning program—condoms assailed his religious sensibilities—and called for people power to help him do it. The El Shaddai and Iglesia ni Cristo called on their own legions to turn out to defend government, and Sin's expostulations were drowned out in a chorus of "Praise the Lord."

The point is simple: You can conspire all you want and you can shout till you turn blue in the face, but the Filipinos will not leave the comfort of their mats unless they agree with you. Or more to the point, unless they feel your cause deeply. What is this—people power is a genie that Aquino and Sin can summon from the lamp at will? In fact, what makes People Power II nothing short of miraculous is that it happened at all. That the most popularly elected president of the Philippines should be toppled by an act of popular will—Filipinos have a right to believe in an ironic, or poetic, Providence.

While at this, why should anybody in his right mind conspire against a popular president *by* resorting to people power? "The solution (to Aquino et al's problem)," Spaeth intones with comical solemnity, was "to bring hundreds of thousands of Filipinos onto Manila's streets." What arrant nonsense. You want to get rid of a leader beloved by the masses, your solution is not to pit mass for mass where you are guaranteed to lose. Your solution is to hire assassins.

Indeed, had Spaeth bothered to look beyond his hotel room, or wherever it was he took lodgings, he would have seen that this pure act of raw courage happened not because of but in spite of Macapagal, Ramos, Cardinal Sin and Aquino. The only reason Edsa II did not happen earlier—Erap's vaunted legions had been rapidly dwindling since October last year—was that Filipinos were leery of Macapagal and fearful of repeating their experience with Aquino. You could walk the length of Payatas to Ayala and you would not find 10 people who would tell you they went to Edsa because of Aquino, or Sin, of Ramos, or Macapagal. They would tell you that they went there for their children.

Spaeth says he's seen mobs like that of Edsa II but found them to be nice mobs, which Edsa wasn't. Well, either he had one cocktail too many before plunging into the crowd or he was desperately looking for something contrary to say to feel important—and justify his representation allowance—to miss the point entirely. I was there too and I saw that mob applaud Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. unabashedly and boo Macapagal in part. I saw the same mob agree to welcome Macapagal because she was the duly constituted successor to Erap and not insist on someone who had a moral, and not merely legal claim, to the job.

That was what Erap used to say about the people who railed against his efforts to turn his nation into a gangster state—they were a mob. He forgot—as does Spaeth—that the true mob, in all the senses of the word, including Mob (it was Lucio Tan who theorized, a la Lee Kuan Yew, that a "guided Mafia" best suited the sensibilities of Asians, and promptly foisted one on his not-very-well adopted country), was to be found not in the alleys of Edsa but in the corridors of Malacañang. Why shouldn't the Filipinos, as a matter of self-defense, as a matter of constitutional and moral imperative, as a matter of life and death, not rise up to excise a cancer from their bodies?

Spaeth may imagine Filipinos take to the streets to oust duly elected leaders as easily or whimsically as they send text messages. He is entitled to his delusions. I myself have always thought that what made the Constitution was the blood and tears, the hopes and dreams, a people shed and showered upon their land. I've always thought that what made a democracy was not the strength of its government but the strength of its people. I've always thought that what made the United States great was not that it had leaders who did not steal or murder but that it had citizens that would not allow them to steal or murder.

But truly, people tend to yearn for the things they have not got. You live in a democracy too long, you appreciate the virtues of authoritarianism. You live in a well-lit world for so long, you begin to see the allures of the underworld. You live among parachute journalists for so long, you get to mistake gangsters for presidents.

Rep. Sergio Apostol may not be able to pronounce "mob rule" as well as Spaeth—he calls it "mob roll"—but he at least knows its meaning better than him. Time keeps Spaeth on its payroll to report on societies and cultures he does not understand, and Time will always be out of sync.

Edsa II worries Western media

(Concluded from last Monday's Analysis)

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE MAIN points of the criticisms by the commentators and reporters of the liberal Western media of People Power II may be summed up, as follows:

- The ouster of President Joseph Estrada was "a defeat for due process" and has "left the notion of constitutional democracy in tatters."
- Filipinos had the mechanisms—i.e., impeachment—to legally change their head of state, but they chose a popular uprising, which method portends a "troubling future for democracy."
- Edsa II was "rich people's power" that ejected an elected President in order to return the old, wealthy political and business elite to power."

Estrada deflected the call for his resignation as early as last October to a constitutional due process—the impeachment trial. The call was sparked by the disclosure of Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson accusing Estrada of taking *jueteng* payoffs and skimming excise tax money. The impeachment trial slowed street action demanding his resignation. Filipinos gave the impeachment process a chance to work. They felt betrayed after the Senate voted 11-10 to seal an envelope containing evidence on corruption. It sparked a conflagration of anger that quickly developed into People Power II in Manila and in provincial cities, intensifying the demand for Estrada's resignation.

When the evidence was suppressed in the trial, Filipinos concluded they were betrayed and that Estrada and his cohorts scuttled the constitutional process as a prelude to acquit him. That vote drove Filipinos to the streets because they perceived a constitutional process of last resort was sabotaged. It also damaged the integrity of the Senate as an impartial impeachment court. The public perceived that despite damaging evidence introduced during the trial, the Senate had been subverted by the President to render an acquittal.

Estrada's crisis of confidence derived from incompetent economic management, bad governance and involvement in a wave of corruption scandals. But the triggering spark of people power was the blasting of the people's confidence in their institutions—e.g., the Senate and the impeachment trial. These sparked the rage that culminated in People Power II. Estrada had undermined key political institutions—such as the political parties, Congress and the Cabinet—as a counterweight to vast presidential powers. When the impeachment trial collapsed, the people were left without any further option of deciding the impeachment case with due process.

In stable Western democracies where institutions like parliament, the courts and the parties serve as checks and balances, leaders can be removed either by impeachment or by a parliamentary vote of confidence. The three impeachment trials in the United States of American presidents were never aborted or undermined by such things as closure of evidence. Because the United States has strong political institutions, in which the Americans have deep confidence, they resolved the stalemate between Vice President Al Gore and Gov. George W. Bush through a Supreme Court ruling. Strong institutions precluded Americans from going to the streets to resolve conflict.

Filipinos have a high threshold of patience to take abuse of power and appalling corruption. But when they are denied the last resort to democratic due process—as in the impeachment trial—they assert their sovereign right to replace their leaders by taking to the streets. The Filipinos rose in the 1986 People Power Revolution after President Marcos stole the election. That was the last straw. Marcos' dictatorship controlled the entire apparatus of the political system—the military and police, the courts, the legislature and the press—and ruled by decree. When he stole the 1986 snap election, the people, already fired up by the assassination of Benigno Aquino Jr. in 1983, felt their last chance of changing leaders through a democratic process—election—was foreclosed. So, they went to the streets to depose Marcos.

The point is that when Filipinos are robbed of the constitutional or legal due process through which they can effect political change, they exercise their fundamental sovereign rights. If Marcos and Estrada had not scuttled and undermined the integrity of the democratic processes, they could have been changed without people power. The antidote against future people power is to strengthen countervailing political institutions and good governance.

On the issue of "rich people's power" driven by the elite conspiracy, observable evidence shows the mass at Edsa had a wider class composition than the elite of Makati. The mass had a large middle-class component. The entire business community—big or small—was up in arms because the Estrada leadership crisis had hurt business. They were certainly not acting in a conspiracy to bring down Estrada. Lower income groups represented by trade unions joined people power.

Estrada fostered the myth he had the support of the poor. The poor were the most hurt by the business slowdown. They received doles from Estrada but he never shared with them the loot he extracted through illegal gambling and kickbacks. Corruption hurt the poor. In the final week of the crisis, all he could do was to recruit and pay hoodlums and lumpen people to stage counterrallies which became pitifully smaller as the crisis intensified.

One may ask. Where did the poor go? They either stayed in the sidelines or joined Edsa. They were engulfed by the Edsa mass. True, Estrada won the 1998 election with 40 percent of the vote. But electoral mandates are not static. They melt down under the heat of corruption, incompetence and bad governance. Edsa III can be avoided if due process is respected (not subverted), government is competent and honest, institutions are strengthened, and poverty is addressed by programs. People Power I and II are the Filipino people's message that the exercise of raw democracy in the streets is a necessary step to achieve a stable institutional democracy.

Lessons on power

COMMENTARY

Nono Alfonso, S.J.
Institute on Church and Social Issues

ONE of the lessons of recent months is on power, in particular, the people's understanding of political power. From the "juetengate" exposé to the aborted impeachment trial and to the People Power II, one can discern how the Filipino people look at power. This can be gleaned especially from how they reacted to certain key power players. Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson's exposé elicited disgust and outrage over an abusive and corrupt presidency. Speaker Manny Villar, the Joker Arroyo-led prosecution team, Chief Justice Hilario Davide and the 10 senators who voted for the opening of the second envelope became instant heroes. In contrast, the 11 pro-Estrada senators, the President's lawyers and his propaganda people were treated like the scum of the earth. Cory Aquino and Jaime Cardinal Sin, on the other hand, were revered and the rediscovered People Power II at Edsa inspired and strengthened a sense of power among the populace. In all these, what can be said of the people's perception or understanding of power?

Government, as any political science student would point out, is about power. And politics is the art and science of using that power. Politicians like Marcos, and now the deposed President Estrada tend to succumb to the great temptation of abusing power, and consequently, are made to pay dearly for this. Theirs is the mentality, of one *"trapo"* lawmaker who quipped that notorious line, "What are we in power for?"

The Filipino public, on the other hand, has been ambivalent toward power. A survey once revealed that many Filipinos are attracted to strong, powerful and even authoritarian leaders. When Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew visited the Philippines during Ramos' time, not a few Filipinos agreed with him that what this country needs is not a democracy but a "benevolent dictator" like himself. In fact, some pundits would say this explains why it took such a long time for the Filipino people to overthrow Marcos.

And yet despite this, the Filipinos have also shown a growing if not maturing understanding of what power, political power, is all about First, there is an understanding of the limits of power (or its abuse) In the case of Marcos, the assassination of Ninoy Aquino for the Filipinos was the last straw that broke the camel's back. It provoked a moral outrage that resulted in the 1986 February Revolution. The cry of the times then said it all: *"Tama na, sobra na, palitan na."* In the Estrada administration, the conspiracy of the pro-Estrada senators against truth broke the patience of the Filipino public and spelled the start of the end for the Erap presidency.

Secondly, the Filipinos are starting to realize the real source of power. It resides in the Filipino people, as the Constitution says. The government's hold on power is only incidental. A public office is a public trust—a privilege loaned to a few as long as they enjoy the trust and confidence of the people. It is never anyone's property. No individual, no family, no dynasty has an absolute claim on it; for it belongs to the sovereign people. The People Power of 1986 and 2001 have shown that in the case of an abusive government, they can and will reclaim that power. People Power has given them a recourse in case of government abuse. No longer would they feel powerless and helpless against the excesses of government.

And yet the guarantee that such expression of political power by the people would not turn into a mob rule and become an excess or abuse in itself, is the force of the truth. The truth must be behind the people. In the 1986 and 2001 popular revolts, the people were fighting for the truth, they were against regimes that suppressed the truth—Marcos with the brute force of martial law silencing the freedom of the press and the right of the people to expression and information, Estrada with his propaganda machinery and its unparalleled propensity to lie about the real state of affairs of his administration and of the country.

Finally, with a growing appreciation of the limits and origin of power, there is also a greater understanding of what it is. Political power is a positive force for the common good, for the betterment of society, for social change. It is never an end in itself as many politicians have gotten used to treating it. The biblical understanding of power and authority is the opportunity and venue for service. One taxi driver, commenting on the "juetengate" scandal, put it simply; "As a taxi driver, I bring passengers to wherever they want to go. That is my job. Why can't these government officials just do their jobs and serve the public?"

As Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and her administration start a new page in the country's history, it would do well for them to keep in mind the Filipino people's growing understanding, of political power. Moreover, as she and her government occupy their posts, they would do well not to listen to the temptations to abuse that also inhabit the halls of power and privilege.

The hotheaded Antonio Luna

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

ANTONIO Luna has come down in Philippine history as a hothead. He took offense at the slightest things—both real and imagined—and was quick to challenge people to duels. Among the people Luna so challenged to cross swords or pistols with were Jose Rizal and a Spanish journalist who signed himself Mir Deas. I sometimes think that Luna survived many fights because he invoked the gentleman's code of honor for duels and was better than his opponents. Luna died in 1899 because the Cavite assassins who riddled him with bullets and hacked him with bolos did not know or care for codes of honor. These reptiles did not even fight, one-to-one they ganged up on Luna. No wonder Luna's famous last words were not inspiring—these were swear words that begin with the letter "p."

The duel with Rizal that would have cost us one or two national heroes was over a woman—Nellie Boustead—they were both courting. Rizal obviously won Nellie's affection and Luna, while intoxicated, started to say things he normally kept to himself. There is some truth to the saying *in vino veritas*. Luna challenged Rizal to a duel, but Rizal walked away considering that Luna was drunk. Antonio's elder brother, Juan, writing Rizal from France in late August 1890 said:

"I regret deeply the incident between you and Antonio and between him and other friends, because, in the final analysis, though he was drunk, these incidents are very unpleasant and the Manila Spaniards must have rubbed their hands with contentment upon hearing about it.

"I suppose that this incident will not be the cause of any resentment between the Filipinos and Antonio, for, having taken back what he had said and gave them permission to tie him if he got drunk again, he showed that he was repentant of the evil he had caused the gathering and his friends.

"It is true that Antonio has a strong character and he is very sensitive. This is very good if the cause is just. That is why I abstain from saying anything to him, as you suggest, hoping that some intimate friend of his give him counsel that I myself could give him. I beg you not to let him get drunk again on Thursday when you hold your next meeting."

What I did not realize before was that aside from the love triangle between Antonio, Rizal and Nellie, another cause for resentment was that Juan Luna did not trust Antonio with money. From Paris, Juan sent part of Antonio's allowance through Rizal who paid this directly to Luna's landlady in Madrid. Juan knew his brother too well to risk rent money going to wine or loose women. We also see from Rizal's correspondence that Juan was *consentedor* and did not restrain Antonio from justified brawls.

One just duel was when a Spanish journalist, Mir Deas, commented on an article Antonio wrote under the byline Taga-ilog. Not only was the Luna article attacked, Taga-ilog was wrongly identified as Juan Luna. Antonio first reacted by interchanging the letters in his opponent's byline, converting Mir Deas into Mierdas, the Spanish word for shit. (Fortunately, very few Filipinos today use the phrase *"mag lamierda tayo,"* because they do not realize what they are saying.) Then Luna stalked his prey and in a crowded café, shouted invectives and called his victim names. To cap the insults with injury, Luna spat in Mir Deas' face and threw his calling card as a challenge to a duel. However, knowing Luna's reputation as a swordsman, Mir Deas declined. Luna settled down only when La Solidaridad called on the Spanish Press Club to constitute a committee to settle the problem. We don't know what came of this.

In 1899 Luna was angered by Tomas Mascardo who only recognized orders from Emilio Aguinaldo. Mascardo not only refused a direct order from Luna, he did so with a sneering reference to a sensitive part of Luna's anatomy. Infuriated, Luna brought troops to Guagua to discipline Mascardo, giving the Americans the chance to break through the defense and win the Battle of Bagbag. In the Library of Congress I found a letter from Luna to Felipe Buencamino dated April 22, 1899 that reads:

"The telegrams exchanged between General Tomas Mascardo and myself carry phrases that I consider offensive in great degree. These offenses can be settled between men and I think that Mascardo is a gentleman. Thus, I request you and Col. Francisco Roman to go and extract from this gentleman a written retraction for everything he said or gain satisfaction through a duel. I thank you and Colonel Roman for representing me in this odious situation. "

Attached to this letter was another sheet in Luna's handwriting containing numbered instructions taken from the code of honor for duels. These were sent in the event that Mascardo refused a written apology. Details of the duel were to be discussed: seconds, place, time, and since Luna was the offended party he had choice of weapons and chose swords. All these were to be arranged within 24 hours—or not later than 48 hours. I thought my data were complete until I visited major US Libraries to research on something else. I console myself with the thought that no historian can ever be definitive and if I wait to get all materials, I risk not writing my book at all.

* * *

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Gloria 'para sa masa'?

OUTLOOK

Rigoberto Tiglao

CAN be. But it's certainly not as catchy as the deposed President's "Erap *para sa mahirap*" (Erap for the poor). And they'll just sneer that she's aping the former actor's style.

"Arroyo *para umasenso*" (Arroyo for growth)? Sounds good. But she'll be a bit sending a signal that People Power II which catapulted her to power was essentially a middle and upper class revolt, and that her administration will be catering to that strata.

We hope though that the limits of political sloganeering won't bolster what could be the worst consequence of the fall of Estrada's and with him, his "Erap *para sa mahirap*" catchphrase: a backlash to the country's need for a massive poverty reduction program.

It's in fact an uphill climb for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to ensure, and show, that a poverty-alleviation program remains a top priority of her administration. The foreign press casually refers to her as a member of the elite, to contrast her with Estrada as somebody out of the elite power loop. And let's face it, the Jan. 19 uprising was to some extent, as one foreign magazine put in its headline, "Rich People's Power."

Poverty alleviation after all is a national cry that has intensified in the past several years. It should be. Poverty incidence had gone down from the 1985 level of 41 percent to 25 percent in 1997. But that still means a quarter of the Philippine population, or 18 million people. Worse, the reduction of poverty incidence has stopped, increasing to 28 percent in 1998.

And don't forget that, being poor in these "poverty incidence" statistics means you earn at most US$2 a day. More than half of the poor by that definition actually make only one-fourth of that. More bad news: from the 1980s to the 1990s, according to the World Bank's June 2000 study, the Philippines had the worst record in reducing poverty incidence in the entire East Asia, including China. The country's annual rate of decline in poverty incidence in this period was only 2.6 percent. Thailand's was 8.1 percent, and Malaysia's, 7.3 percent.

Even the World Bank—all throughout the 1970s and 1980s always focusing the "growth" theme in its annual reports—in the past few years has instead been emphasizing that it is poverty which developing countries must urgently address. It's a realization among even the most laissez faire economists: free markets don't automatically result in the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

Ironically, it took a former actor—who turned out be our most obtuse President ever such that his hand was caught in the cookie jar halfway through his term—to realize that.

It's a myth that Estrada won because of his popularity as a former actor—probably as many as 60 percent of the voters, mostly in their 20s and 30s, in 1998 hadn't even seen a single Estrada movie. He won because he managed to project the image—helped a lot by his "Erap *para sa mahirap*" slogan—that of all candidates, it was he who had the bias for the poor. "Rich" and "politician" were certainly written all over his main rival's, Jose de Venecia's, face.

The ethos of the past Ramos administration, embodied in its slogan "Philippines 2000," was a business, upper and middle class one. Ramos' favorite "level the playing field" is a business, entrepreneurial buzz term. Think of your office messenger who almost always has to borrow from you for his transport fare tomorrow, or the street children on Ayala Avenue selling sampaguita leis: most Filipinos can't even get to the playing field.

With Estrada and his "Erap *para sa mahirap*" slogan becoming "Erap *para humirap*" (Erap to be impoverished) in People Power II's placards, one can almost hear Ramos' ideologues saying: "We told you so. A pro-poor agenda isn't the way to go in the millennium; focus on growth."

One of the worst legacies really of the Marcos regime was that it trashed in our country the idea of the state nurturing crucial industries necessary for long-term growth. That actually has been a valid model for development, in fact the historical pattern of East Asian growth and one still followed by Malaysia up to now. That model became wrong for us only because of cronyism.

We hope the legacy of the second People Power won't be the trashing of the poverty alleviation agenda. That agenda was wrong only because of cronyism.

Oops, we grew last year

If Estrada were still in Malacañang, he would undoubtedly be boasting the good news that came out over the weekend: the Philippine economy, roughly its Gross Domestic Product or GDP, grew 3.9 percent last year, higher than 3.3 percent in 1999. Including income from abroad, mainly remittances from overseas workers to make up the GNP, the economy grew 4.2 percent from 3.7 percent in 1999.

However, the economy did slow down in the last quarter because of the political crisis that started in October, from 4.8 percent in 1999 fourth quarter to 3.9 percent in the equivalent period last year.

The economy though could be the biggest minefield for President Arroyo. Much of the growth last year was due to agriculture's performance. That was not really due to good governance but because of good weather, of sufficient rainfall. However, the drought-generating El Niño phenomenon though has a five-year cycle, and is expected to return this year.

A big push for the economy, especially in the last two quarters, was the revival of manufacturing from the 1997 Asian contagion. The boost in manufacturing though mainly came from the chip-assembly industry, dependent on the United States' "new economy." Unfortunately for us though, and the new President, it looks more and more like the US economy is slowing down, even moving to a recession, this year. That means our manufacturing sector and our exports would be contracting drastically.

The double whammy—from the downturn in agriculture and manufacturing—could hit us bad. President Macapagal's team should by now be drawing up a strategy to address such a worst-case scenario.

* * *

More than two-thirds (66 percent) of respondents to this paper's online poll thought former President Fidel Ramos and his group are dominating the administration of President Macapagal. Only 24 percent didn't think so. The good news, for Macapagal and Ramos, is that after two days of the poll, only 686 bothered to respond. Normally this online poll gets at least 3,000 respondents. Our conclusion: people so far just don't care. What they want is whoever is in Macapagal's Cabinet, they deliver.

* * *

Comments: rtiglao@in7.net

THEY SAID

Back again

"We are back in business."
—Raul Concepcion on the change of administration

Proud father

"Your father must be beaming in heaven, proudly telling God that you are his daughter."
—Jaime Cardinal Sin told President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

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LETTERS

And now to Edsa II (B)

NOW that Filipinos have expeditiously accomplished the easy task of booting President Joseph Estrada out of office, we, the people, now have a harder mission: Edsa II (B), to bring to justice the ousted President, his cronies, his 11 senator-cohorts who suppressed evidence and obstructed justice, and possibly even Erap's chief defense lawyer, Estelito Mendoza, who reportedly was privy to the P3.3-billion "*jueteng* protection money" laundering. Everyone who committed a crime against the Constitution, our country and our people must be held accountable for their action, indicted and tried, without exception.

No one, not even the President or our legislators, is above the law. If nothing else, our government leaders, occupying offices of public trust, must be held to a higher standard of accountability and justice than citizen Juan de la Cruz, and not the other way around. The suspects must be tried and the guilty punished. Let us enforce our laws and let justice prevail.

Several pro-Erap personalities fled the country at the height of the Edsa II Revolution and the exodus continues.

An essential part of the healing process for a nation ravaged by the cancer of graft and corruption is to rid itself of all malignant tumors, or remnants thereof from the head down. The main malignancy has been surgically excised by People Power II, leaving the Filipinos the fundamental and necessary job of completing the therapy by searching for, and removing, every remaining cancerous segment in our government. Doing anything less will render the entire treatment useless and allow the cancer to grow and spread, further killing, not only our dying economy, but our self-respect and dignity as a people and as a nation.

The perpetrators and co-conspirators, and all our public officials, pro- or anti-Erap, some of whom did not learn the lesson of Edsa I in 1986, must be served this notice: That we, the people, are mightier and will act more expeditiously than Congress or the courts. That it will not be business as usual. That crime does not pay. That we shall be scrutinizing every word, nuance, action, behavior and performance of the President and her Cabinet, and all our legislators and public officials. That the *padrino, lagay* and *kurakot* system of governance is out, and that leadership by example, of transparency and accountability, is in. And, that the wrath of the parliament of the streets and the people's court will be fair, swift, decisive and above all, merciless.

Doing anything less, even in the guise of compassion, magnanimity and reconciliation, will make a mockery of our justice system and a travesty of our People Power II Revolution.

The voice of the people rang out loud and clear, and it will be wise for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to heed their call for justice lest she herself become the object of fury and indignation of Edsa III.—**PHILIP S. CHUA, M.D., chair, Cardiovascular Surgery, Cebu Cardiovascular Center, Cebu Doctors' Hospital**

Heherson Alvarez for VP

WITH THE STUNNING success of Edsa II, we Filipinos could once again hold our heads high, redeemed by a bloodless, constitutionally sanctioned People Power Revolt that led to the ouster of a brazenly venal and criminal President.

In retrospect, the first Edsa is now widely acknowledged as a failed or squandered opportunity, where our collective sins of omission—perhaps more than our sins of commission—simply aborted our people's rising expectations of a better society. Edsa II gives us a rare second chance to finish what we failed to accomplish and prove to ourselves that the Filipino is indeed worth dying for.

But at this early stage one could already sense signs of danger as compromise threatens to rear its ugly head from the selection of Cabinet and key officials to the "reconciliation" and "healing process." In the selection process, for instance, we sincerely hope that one of the unsung heroes of Edsa II, Rep. Heherson Alvarez, Lakas secretary general, is not forgotten and left out in the cold as "retreads" and opportunists who had little or no role in dismantling the Estrada regime, have once again resurfaced to lobby for positions of power. Let us never forget that it was Alvarez who had the vision and audacity to light the impeachment fuse at a time when it was unthinkable and considered "doomed to fail." By daring to file the impeachment complaint in the House, after coordinating with NGOs and various cause-oriented groups, as well us kindred souls in Congress, Alvarez played a very critical role in Edsa II.

In our recurring landscape of political butterflies and Juan-come-latelies, Alvarez stands out for his remarkable consistency, clarity, relevance and integrity. From the crucible of the darkest days of the Marcos dictatorship to the present trials of our society, he has been a true and forceful champion of freedom, human rights and social justice.

For these reasons, I think it would serve the best interest of the country if President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo picks Alvarez as her Vice President.—**NARCISO REYES JR., chair, Region 4, Sarang Bangun Foundation, 2 Fetalvero St., Romblon, Romblon**

Overpaid loan to be refunded

THIS is in reference to the letter of Cesar Peralta, which appeared last Dec. 25, 2000. Peralta complained against delayed posting of his salary loan payments.

Based on our records, Peralta's employer misprinted his Social Security System number in the SSS collection list, which resulted in non-posting of his loan repayments.

We have made the necessary corrections on Peralta's SSS number and have posted his loan repayments in the amount of P1,820.

The amount has an overpayment of P560, which will be refunded to Peralta. It would be mailed to his home address.—**JOEL P. PALACIOS, assistant vice president, Media Affairs Department, Social Security System, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City**

Seconding the motion

I SECOND the motion of Enrique Zobel for Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel to be our next Vice President.

The senator must reconsider his decision to decline if and when President Macapagal nominates him to the No. 2 post. "*Delicadeza*" is a misplaced issue here.

Right-thinking and God-fearing Filipinos deserve Pimentel.—**JOSE G. BURGOS JR., magsasaka-peryodista, Barangay Tartaro, San Miguel, Bulacan**

Pro-farmer Cabinet members needed

IT is disheartening that the search for people to compose the present administration is fast deteriorating into yet another exercise in political accommodation. If it is any indication of the present dispensation's sincerity in pursuing change, then clearly the nation should not hold its breath lest it asphyxiate.

President Macapagal steps into the presidency on high moral ground. It would be foolish to waste the momentum for change generated by the second people power uprising in less than two decades by succumbing to the convenience of patronage politics.

Ms Macapagal should remember that it was the people through civil society that had been waging the fight against Estrada and his cohorts since the early part of the Estrada administration—long before it was in vogue. In contrast, many of the people now lining up for their share of the spoils were either in cozy arrangements with the former regime or conveniently silent even as its gangster tendencies wreaked havoc on the nation.

Ms Macapagal should disabuse herself of any notion that her ascension to power on the backs of the people who stood up against an incompetent and corrupt regime assures her of an endless supply of goodwill. The people's continued support is dependent on her ability and determination to deliver on the promises she made before them at Edsa. No more, no less.

For its part, the peasant sector is closely watching the new President. The farmers have not forgotten the major role she played in the ratification of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in the Senate which had disastrous consequences for our farmers. Neither have they forgotten that she was the principal author of the Investors Lease Act which gave foreign investors the right to lease land for a period of 50 years, renewable for another 25 years which time the land may not be distributed to agrarian reform beneficiaries.

After decades of neglect, the country's agriculture sector remains backward and vulnerable even as those of our neighbors are moving into the 21st century. The rural areas are home to the vast majority of the country's poor. The need for leadership that has the farmers' interests at heart is obvious. This need should not be sacrificed at the altar of booty politics. As a sign of her sincerity and commitment to improve the farmers' lot, she should appoint Cabinet members who are recognized as genuinely pro-farmer particularly in the crucial departments of agriculture and agrarian reform.

She has failed the farmers once, President Macapagal should take care not to fail them again lest she find herself in the same predicament as her predecessor.—**RIZA BERNABE, program director, Policy Advocacy and Lobbying Unit, Philippine Peasant Institute, Rm. 319, PSSC Bldg., Commonwealth Avenue, 1104 Diliman, Quezon City**

Retirees in SSS, GSIS boards

IN THE SWIRL of reforms being initiated by the new administration, the interests of retirees should not be neglected.

Retirees constitute the biggest single group of persons serviced by the Social Security System and the Government Service Insurance System. It is therefore essential that they be represented in operations of the SSS and GSIS. This can be accomplished by appointing a representative of the Philippine Association of Retired Persons Inc. (PARP) to the governing board of these institutions.

We urge the Macapagal administration to consider the merits of this suggestion.—**W. YRASTORSA AND E. ASINAS, 7688 Hemlock St., Marcelo Green Village, Parañaque City**

Source of a nation's strength

TO THE FILIPINOS who were at Edsa, to the Filipinos who joined the nationwide protests, to the Filipinos who gathered and sent their support from overseas and to the Filipinos who were there in spirit and in prayers—congratulations!

Again, the Filipinos have shown the world where the strength of a nation comes—from the people, as in our own People Power. Let all the dictators and tyrants of the world beware, as once again, Filipinos showed in shining fashion how a nation joined together, a people gathered in unity, can topple a government.

I was there in Edsa People Power I (February 1986) though I was only a 9-year-old kid then.

But, what I am proud to say is that I was also there in Edsa People Power II (January 2001) and this time older and wiser. I know that my name will never be mentioned in the history books, but I was actually part of history in the making, a miracle of sorts—as millions of ordinary people gathered together as one nation.

This is a memory to treasure with delight because although we made sacrifices to travel by foot (as regular transport was interrupted, and it was a three-hour long walk from Edsa to Mendiola) and hold vigils and Masses by day and night, we did it so happily and lovingly, celebrating as a nation reborn, sharing a common hope that our sacrifices for today will usher in a better future.

This is a memory of fear because we were all scared for we truly risked our limbs and lives to stand up to a corrupt and unjust President and government. Yet, despite the odds, we succeeded in booting out an undesirable President.

The Filipinos did it again! Thank you to the millions of Filipinos overseas, for even if they were miles away, I know that their hearts will always be longing for home. I know that their minds will always wander back to the Philippines and their prayers will always go with the Filipino people.

Again, congratulations to the Filipino people!—**CELESTE AIDA N. SERRANO, senior account manager, Corplan Inc.**

Youth must take the forefront

IN THE INAUGURAL of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, she stressed the need for new politics of true party programs and platforms. She talked about achieving genuine reform in the government. The National Movement of Young Legislators (NMYL) would like to express its agreement with the core belief of the President. It believes that there should be more young competent leaders in the government. Our young leaders who possess the idealism and vast reservoir of energy and talent, are the tools in achieving genuine reform.

The youth have already proven it several times, not only in Edsa, that reforms and changes are within our bounds. As the new President carefully selects those who will aid her achieve changes, we expect to see more young credible leaders in her Cabinet, advisers and the government bureaucracy. We expect her to encourage the youth to participate and join in the national and local elections. We expect to see new politics, the politics of the youth and progressives. If the President sincerely believes what she is saying, *ibasura na ang mga trapo.*—**DEL DE GUZMAN, vice mayor, Marikina City and president, National Movement of Young Legislators, 2/F Unit 1, Francisco Gold Condominium, 784 Edsa, Quezon City**

Mixing politics and garbage

COMMENTARY

Bernardo V. Lopez

ON FRIDAY, Jan. 26, 2001, Narda Camacho called me up, inviting me to a press conference on the garbage crisis. Before then, I had written many articles in the last two years about Narda concerning waste management. Let me give a brief background on her.

Narda was the brains behind the so-called "zero-waste management." The scheme was so ingenious, she won an award in London several years ago. In this scheme, about 90 percent of garbage is recycled. The system was so dirt-cheap, it needed no loans in the millions as in the landfill system. For this, she was acclaimed by the World Bank. The system was not only dirt cheap, it earned a lot of money from recycling.

Narda put up an NGO to work on the system. There were several successful models in Bulacan and Quezon City. She proposed the system to the mayors of Manila. It was turned down because the P3-billion-a-year trucking business for the landfill system controlled by them and mainly passed on to "fronts" would suddenly die.

It seemed some of the news articles attacking the mayors worked. Robert Aventajado approached Narda to try to implement her brainchild. Narda walked out of the talks because Aventajado insisted on his own concept of segregating garbage into two parts for two separate landfills instead of Narda's four or five. Narda said Aventajado's plan would encourage scavenging and create several Payatases instead of one. The plan simply wanted to appease the public clamoring for a sane waste management system. It had no sincerity or brains behind it.

The mayors also insisted that landfill should not be stopped. Narda felt landfills would undermine and compete with the efforts of recycling. Landfills were good only as a temporary measure until the recycling system was in place.

After the Payatas avalanche, Narda approached its scavengers, trained them to be recycling experts, and gave them capital. Her NGO was able to buy P300,000 worth of garbage from them. They were now earning P100 to P200 a day, better than their scavenging days. The scheme awed the international community. CNN gave Narda a 20-minute live interview three weeks ago and branded her the "recycling queen of Asia." But they were shocked why the government does not listen to her.

Perhaps you can now guess who authored the Solid Waste Management Act. Some senators are claiming they wrote it because they know it is the key to solving the garbage crisis that would make them "heroes."

Narda endorsed her vision to Sen. Gregorio Honasan who "authored" the ensuing Senate Bill 960, which has been passed into law as the Solid Waste Management Act. Honasan later talked to the plastic industry and got a DBP loan for them to set up pollution devices.

Narda's vision which is now a law she authored, bans landfills and incinerators because these are major pollutants and will also eventually kill the recycling scheme. It mandates the creation of a national commission with multi-sectoral members, including representatives from NGOs.

Asked how long it will take to implement her model Metro Manila-wide, Narda says two to three months. This is because the DOST has to build the bio-reactors to turn wet garbage into compost for fertilizer. Hydromex, a private firm, has to set up a chemical treatment system to neutralize toxins from residual solid waste such as shoes, carton boxes, etc.

If we double Narda's time frame to six months because of possible political and social snags, it is worth it. All we need is a temporary landfill, a small one, to handle 6,000 metric tons of garbage a day from nine million people until the recycling system is implemented. It is possible to turn Metro Manila into a landfill-less ecological paradise but this needs political will and the cooperation of each and every household because the scheme begins at the kitchen level where garbage is instantly segregated the moment it is thrown. It needs the total unconditional support of mayors and barangay leaders and housewives. The ongoing garbage crisis is the "wake-up call" for people and politicians to move together.

The mayors will insist on landfill because they need the income from the trucking business for the coming election. And they prefer a garbage crisis for the public rather than a political crisis for themselves. The obsession for power has blinded their consciences.

When Narda suggested to implement a Malaysian technique to strengthen roads by mixing recycled rubber tires with asphalt, it was turned down because it would obviously reduce road repairs and the "commissions" they bring to politicians and contractors.

Anarchy lurks in high places because survival depends on corrupt practices. Narda, who can save us from a garbage crisis, is becoming a Don Quixote because there are immovable forces which resist change.

Only the people can pressure the mayors to change not by persuasion but by force because they will never relinquish P3 billion a year in income. Narda says we cannot mix garbage and politics because it involves the health of Filipinos which is non-negotiable. Who cares about the health of people? Not the mayors. They need money for the election.

Watch out for Narda's press conference, if it has not yet happened. She will deliver a time bomb to prick the conscience of government into action on a matter of urgency. She will announce a wake-up call for people to rise against the mayors. I would even suggest to President Macapagal to appoint Narda as chair of the commission. After all, this is the era of women like Clarissa Ocampo and Tessie Aquino-Oreta who catalyzed Edsa 2 and installed the second woman president in our history.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Intramuros, Manila

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) shall undertake an annual pre-qualification of prospective bidders for the supply of the following:

1. Office Supplies
2. Computer Supplies
3. Construction and Electrical Supplies
4. Computer Equipment (Hardware and Software)
5. Air-conditioner Equipment
6. Repair and Maintenance Service:
   - Computer
   - Air-conditioner
   - Typewriters
   - Service and Utility Vehicles
7. Printing Services

The prospective bidders are required to submit on or before February 15, 2001 to the Pre-qualification, Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC) Pre-qualification Secretariat, Cash Division (CD), 2nd Flr., DOLE Building, Intramuros, Manila, the following pre-qualification data/documents:

1. Current Business Mayor's Permit
2. SEC Registration/CDA Registration/BDT Registration of Business Name
3. Articles of Incorporation/Partnership, Articles of Cooperation in case of Cooperatives
4. By-Laws
5. Financial Statements for the past 2 years with corresponding Income Tax Returns certified by an Accountant and which bear the imprint of the BIR as proof that the same had been submitted to the BIR for tax purpose as well as the corresponding Official receipt.
6. SSS Registration Certificate
7. VAT Registration Certificate
8. Company Profile (including the year the company started operations)
9. Company Organization Chart
10. Bio-Data of Key/Technical Personnel with corresponding years of experience
11. List of sample clients or projects completed, their addresses, telephone numbers including contract amount
12. Bank certificates as to Fund Balances
13. Notarized Certificate/Board Resolution of Authorized Signatory to Bid Documents

Bidders who have already submitted and updated the above documents need not submit the required documents again.

The pre-qualification data submitted by the prospective bidders are to be used in determining, according to the PBAC's sole judgment and discretion, the eligibility and competence of the prospective bidders. The bidders in submitting their qualifications for review, waive any claim against the Department that may arise with respect to any adverse decision that may be rendered thereon.

Only those pre-qualified shall be allowed to join the biddings on the said items to be conducted within this year.

The DOLE reserves the right to pre-qualify or to disqualify any prospective bidder without thereby incurring any obligation to the affected bidders.

(Sgd.) ROSALINDA DIMAPILIS-BALDOZ
Undersecretary and
Chairman, Pre-qualification, Bids and Awards Committee

23 January 2001

(PDI – Jan. 28 & 31, 2001)

The WORLD

MARGOT J. BATERINA, Editor

MIRACLE IN INDIA

2 babies rescued from quake debris

'**MIRACLE** baby' Sweta Kumar, seven months old, lies in the arms of her mother Bhawna two hours after she was pulled out of the rubble of her house in Bhachau town, 70 km east of Bhuj in western India, Jan. 29. AP

BHUJ, India—The discovery of two living babies Monday—an 8-month-old boy covered in his dead mother's blood but cradled in her lap and a 7-month-old girl—captured the heartbreak and the singular miracles of India's killer earthquake.

The rescues gave rare cause for hope following the earthquake, which killed at least 6,200 people and as many as 20,000—or more. Damage was estimated at up to $5.5 billion. India's prime minister acknowledged Monday that his country was ill-prepared for disasters.

In the boy's case, doctors said the warmth of his mother's body helped him survive three days in the ruins of a collapsed building in Bhuj's Kansara Market.

"We saw the baby in the mother's lap, we saw some movement from the baby," said R.K. Thakur, a Border Security Forces assistant commandant. "I took the baby in my hand and I found it was alive."

The boy, Murtza Ali, was rushed to a medical center. Surviving relatives were found and the child was later conscious and smiling, Thakur said, adding: "It was miraculous."

The girl, Sweta Kumar, was rescued from the rubble of her home in a town east of Bhuj. Hours later, her joyous mother and other relatives took turns holding her close.

There are few even partly happy endings in western India these days.

Survivors complained Monday that confusion and a lack of equipment was hampering rescue efforts. Rescuers lacked cranes and bulldozers, and many units did not even have generators, making night work impossible without lights. Soldiers hunting for survivors began work at first light and stopped when the sun went down.

The hope of finding many more survivors "is dwindling hour by hour, but as long as there is hope, we won't give up," said Joachim Ahrens, who represents a Swiss rescue team in Bhuj.

In the first estimate of damage, the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Secretary General Amit Mitra said quake losses may be as high as $5.5 billion besides a daily production loss of $111 million. However, officials in Gujarat state, epicenter of Friday's magnitude 7.9 quake, put the figure at $2.17 billion. *AP*

Indonesian defense minister warns of military takeover

JAKARTA—Defense Minister Mohammad Mahfud on Tuesday warned that political chaos and anarchy would prompt Indonesia's armed forces (TNI) to take over the country.

Mahfud said TNI could take "a one-sided action" if the military deemed that the country's politicians had "failed to lead the country."

He also warned legislators to refrain from making "decisions that would violate the Constitution that could provoke the TNI" into taking over.

"Firstly, if chaos and massive anarchy ensue, the TNI will take actions because they do not want to risk this nation breaking apart.

"Secondly, if (they see) that the Constitution is being violated by anyone," Mahfud told palace journalists after meeting with President Abdurrahman Wahid.

Mahfud's warning came amid mounting conflict between Wahid and MPs of the lower house, the People's Representative Council (DPR), over an investigation into two financial scandals allegedly linked to the president.

Demonstrators have picketed parliament almost daily in the past week, either supporting the probe or backing Wahid's stance that it was illegal.

A report containing the findings of the investigation was handed over to the DPR late on Monday and MPs are expected to hold on a debate and decide whether to accept or reject the report's conclusion on Thursday.

The results of the investigation into "Bulogate" and "Bruneigate," as the two scandals are known, are expected to conclude that Wahid was implicated in them.

On Monday, thousands of anti-Wahid students marched to the parliament building demanding his resignation if the probe found indications he was implicated in the scandal.

On Sunday Wahid, citing reports from the military, said some 85,000 of his supporters from the Nahdlatul Ulama, the country's largest Islamic group which he once chaired, were beginning to stream into the capital. *AFP*

EU delegates meet Suu Kyi at her house

RANGOON, Burma—A European Union delegation arrived Tuesday for a meeting with Burma (also known as Myanmar) pro-democrat leader Aung San Suu Kyi, only her second reported diplomatic contact during more than four months of house detention.

A motorcade of four cars carrying the representatives from Sweden, Belgium and the European Commission and European Council, entered Suu Kyi's residence on Rangoon's University Avenue, where she has been confined by the Burma military regime since Sept. 22, witnesses said.

The EU delegation's four-day visit, which began late Sunday, is aimed at breaking the decade-long deadlock between the regime and the political opposition led by Suu Kyi. It is the first such EU mission to Burma since July 1999.

The mission gives the EU the chance to hear from Suu Kyi about the first direct talks in six years between the two sides that began in secret in October, signaling an apparent thaw in relations. However, Suu Kyi is still held incommunicado.

Her only other diplomatic contact during that time has been with UN special envoy Razali Ismail, who met with her on two mediation missions in October and January.

Asian and Western governments have welcomed the talks but many observers remain skeptical that a major breakthrough is imminent. The military has ruled Burma since 1962. *AP*

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SPECTACULAR LOOKS

REUTERS

Parade creative director Warwick Broadhead (right) gives the Swan Lake Slappettes some tips on looking spectacular during a practice session at Western Springs Jan. 28. The Slappettes will be performing in the annual Gay and Lesbian Hero Parade in Auckland, New Zealand, Feb. 17.

PAY FOR SOCIAL WORK

Bush allows religions to receive gov't money

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush, challenging traditional notions about separation of church and state, has opened the door for religious groups to receive government money for their work aiding addicts, prisoners, the homeless and more.

"We will not fund the religious activities of any group, but when people of faith provide social services, we will not discriminate against them," the president said Monday.

By his signature on a pair of executive orders, Bush created a White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives—with counterpart offices in five Cabinet-level departments—that will facilitate competition by religious groups and charities for a share of the billions of dollars that the government pays out for social services.

On Tuesday, during a visit to northeast Washington's Fishing School, a spiritual youth center, Bush planned to unveil the legislation he will submit to Congress opening all federal grant programs to participation by religious groups. His proposals will also include tax incentives and liability protection to encourage more charitable giving, aides said.

"Problems like addiction and abandonment and gang violence, domestic violence, mental illness and homelessness—we are called by conscience to respond," Bush said during Monday's signing ceremony in the White House's Indian Treaty Room.

"As long as there are secular alternatives, faith-based charities should be able to compete for funding on an equal basis and in a manner that does not cause them to sacrifice their mission."

Religious leaders of varied faiths and political backgrounds—a Catholic nun in her blue habit, a Muslim imam in his turban, an Orthodox Jew in his yarmulke—surrounded Bush for a smiling photo. Among them were ministers Walter Fauntroy and Floyd Flake, both of them prominent black Democrats. *AP*

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Cops disperse 4,000 Indians in 'national uprising'

QUITO—Police used tear gas to disperse some 4,000 Indians in the capital who took part in a "national uprising" Monday against bus fare hikes and subsidy cuts announced by the government earlier this month.

There were no immediate reports of injuries or arrests.

The police action followed a meeting between President Gustavo Noboa and the military high command to analyze social unrest caused by the economic measures announced as part of an austerity package demanded by the International Monetary Fund as a condition for a three-year, $2 billion aid package.

A government statement issued after the crackdown saying the situation was "under control" and that "operations are underway to ensure highways remain open."

The Indians occupied Salesiana Polytechnic University, near downtown Quito, setting up tents and makeshift kitchens and vowing to stay indefinitely.

Later, hundreds of other Indian protesters used tree trunks and rocks to blockade various points on the Pan-American highway, Ecuador's primary commercial route that runs north-south through the central Andes region.

The government's statement ruled out "any dialogue concerning demands that are impossible to meet," referring to protesters' pleas that the government reverse the economic reforms.

Dozens of police patrolled Quito's El Arbolito park on Monday, which Indian leaders reportedly are planning to use as a base for the protests.

Just over a year ago, Antonio Vargas marched into Quito, leading hundreds of Indian protesters in a takeover of the Congress building with a cadre of disaffected Army officers—sparking the ouster of President Jamil Mahuad. *AP*

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1 killed as Albanians, Serbs clash in Kosovo

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia—A 17-year-old Kosovo Albanian was killed and five others were wounded Monday in a grenade attack by Serbs in the divided Kosovo town of Kosovska Mitrovica, French peacekeeping troops said.

KFOR spokesperson Lt. Col. Desgrees du Lou said the afternoon attack took place in the Albanian-Bosnian quarter in the northern side of the town, just a day after Serbs and ethnic Albanians had clashed in the area.

He said one of the injured was in a serious condition and had been taken to hospital in Pristina.

Immediately following the young man's death, some 350 Kosovo Albanians filled the streets in protest near the east bridge into Mitrovica, in the town's Albanian quarter.

They blocked traffic and threw stones at UN police vehicles.

Later Monday, some 300 angry ethnic Albanians surrounded a car filled with Serbian and Bosnian employees of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), blocking it from entering Mitrovica.

One of the workers was seriously injured when he was pulled from the car by the angry mob and beaten.

The five others, one man and four women, were traumatized, the pan-European security body said in a statement condemning the "brutal attack" against its employee. *AFP*

Palestinian, Jewish killed in new violence before polls

JERUSALEM—A Palestinian and a Jewish settler were killed in fresh bloodshed on Monday with hopes of an elusive Middle East peace deal dashed only eight days before Israelis go to the polls to choose a new prime minister.

After calling a halt to diplomatic contacts with the Palestinians, time is running out for Israeli caretaker Prime Minister Ehud Barak to try to turn around his flagging political fortunes in the uphill battle for reelection against hawkish rival Ariel Sharon.

Opinion polls taken after the failure of marathon peace negotiations in Egypt show Barak trailing far behind Sharon ahead of the special prime ministerial election on Feb. 6.

After four months of deadly violence that has torn through the region, Israelis consider their security a priority over peace, with Sharon now campaigning under the slogan "Mr. Security."

Jewish settler Arieh Hershkovitz, in his '50s, was shot dead in a drive-by shooting in the West Bank northeast of Jersualem only hours after Israeli soldiers killed Palestinian Mohammed Nafiz Abu Musa, 21, in the Gaza Strip.

Their deaths brought to 388 the number of people killed since the Palestinian uprising broke out in late September, including 325 Palestinians, 13 Israeli Arabs, 49 other Israelis and one German.

Barak announced Sunday a halt to peacemaking, following a vitriolic speech by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat at the World Economic Forum in Davos accusing Israel of waging "fascist military aggression" against his people.

"After what Arafat said yesterday, I didn't see any reason to continue the negotiations until after the elections," Barak told reporters.

Arafat took a different tone in an interview broadcast Sunday on Israeli television, in which he said the 1993 peace agreement between the two sides was a "huge success . . . for all the Middle East."

"The most important thing is we are continuing to talk," said Arafat, who met Monday in Egypt with President Hosni Mubarak.

At home, Barak is facing a massive public sector shutdown that has disrupted international flights and left stinking piles of rubbish in the streets because of a pay dispute between the Histradrut union federation and the government.

Sharon's election appears to be almost a foregone conclusion and he has said several times during his campaign that he would be willing to form a national unity government with Barak's Labor party—something Barak has rejected outright. *AFP*

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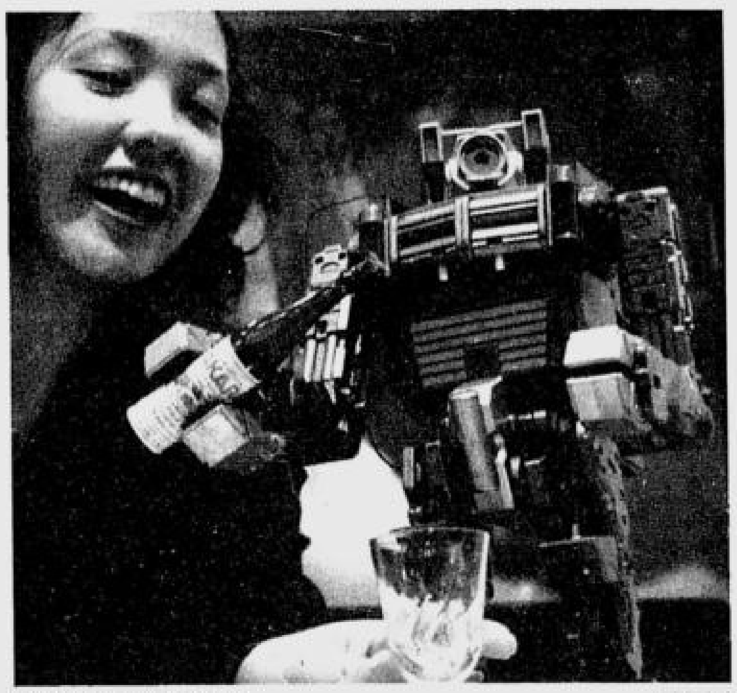

'DREAM FORCE' REUTERS

Toymaker Takara, in cooperation with two other Japanese firms, has developed "Dream Force 01," a 350mm-high robot that was unveiled in Tokyo, Jan. 30. The humanoid-type robot has a CCD camera installed on its face, and by using a special headset, people can see things at robot-eye level. It can also be controlled from anywhere.

Pinochet ordered to stand trial for mass murder

SANTIAGO—Chile's former dictator Augusto Pinochet was ordered to stand trial on murder conspiracy and kidnapping charges stemming from a 1973 military campaign to wipe out opposition to his rule.

Judge Juan Guzman also ordered Pinochet's house arrest and said the former military ruler will be prosecuted in connection with the killings and abductions of 75 political prisoners in the first weeks after his rise to power in a September 1973 coup.

"This is a historic day for our country," said congresswoman Isabel Allende, whose father, Chile's elected socialist president Salvador Allende, died in the coup.

"It's very important that Chile show the world that no matter how powerful Pinochet was, he will have to face justice," she added.

Lawyers for the ailing general, who is suffering from diabetes, heart conditions and "mild to moderate dementia," promised to appeal Guzman's ruling within 24 hours.

An outraged Luis Cortes Villa, head of the Pinochet Foundation, said he was shocked by the very idea of putting on trial a man "who saved the nation from the genuine catastrophe" of turning into a Marxist state.

Guzman has charged Pinochet with being co-author of 18 kidnappings and 57 murders blamed on the Caravan of Death, a military campaign to eliminate dissent in the weeks following the bloody 1973 coup.

PINOCHET

Guzman is coordinating 215 cases of human rights violations against Pinochet, who ruled Chile with an iron fist from 1973 until 1990.

The latest lawsuit, filed Monday, charged Pinochet was behind the abduction and killings of 93 indigenous Mapuche people.

Shouts of joy from relatives of the victims of alleged human rights abuses erupted in the corridors of the court house as they heard the decision.

In stifling summer heat, hundreds of mostly anti-Pinochet demonstrators took to Santiago's streets. About 500—mostly women dressed in black—paraded down a pedestrian walkway carrying a banner reading "Justice, justice, we want justice." *AFP*

Supermodel supports programs for computer skills at Davos forum

DAVOS—Among the many famous figures at the World Economic Forum, supermodel Naomi Campbell was just another pretty face.

But she came to the Swiss Alps less to turn heads than to show support for a program that aims to teach computer skills to young South Africans.

Campbell is a member of the board of the Listen Up Foundation, the brainchild of Grammy Award-winning composer Quincy Jones, who is seeking financial and technical backing for the program. Cisco Systems and AOL Time Warner have expressed support, he said.

Jones hopes to expand the program to other African countries to help them bridge the technology gap with richer nations.

"I hope it spreads like a disease—a positive disease," he said.

Campbell, who has met with former South African President Nelson Mandela, said she wants to use her celebrity to help the cause.

Speaking shyly at a table of more garrulous board members, she recalled Mandela's advice: "You have to use who you are to help others."

Her snug skirt and stiletto-heeled boots were a sharp contrast to the sober setting of the Listen Up news conference: a heavily timbered room where the Davos town fathers have held forth since 1564.

Some of the longest lines at the forum were at a help-desk for world leaders vexed by their free handheld Compaq pocket PCs.

The devices were supposed to make it easier for participants to communicate by e-mail and stay abreast of conference events. But some appeared to be victims of their own "digital divide"—the theme of the six-day forum. *AP*

Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

NDF reiterates demand for detainees' release

LUCENA CITY—The chief peace negotiator of the communist-led National Democratic Front yesterday criticized President Macapagal-Arroyo for ignoring a demand for the swift and unconditional release of all political prisoners but welcoming proposals to let ousted President Estrada go into exile.

"By keeping the more than 200 political prisoners in detention centers while declaring that Mr. Estrada is free to leave the country, the President is turning her back (on) the people who deposed Mr. Estrada and installed her as the new President," Luis Jalandoni, NDF national executive committee member, said in an e-mailed statement from Utrecht, The Netherlands.

The release of all political prisoners as promised last month by ousted President Estrada was one of the conditions set forth by the communist rebels before they would return to the negotiating table for the resumption of the aborted peace talks.

On Sunday, President Macapagal declared that she would press for the prosecution of all the charges filed against Estrada.

However, she said that the question of whether Estrada should be allowed to go into exile was the "call of the ousted President."

Jalandoni asked: "How could Ms Macapagal-Arroyo refuse to heed the people's demand for the release of political prisoners, while (she would allow) Mr. Estrada, adjudged by the people as guilty of corruption and economic plunder . . . to go scot-free?"

He chided Ms Macapagal for refusing to follow the precedent set by former President Corazon Aquino who released all political prisoners after the overthrow of the dictator Marcos.

"Ms Macapagal's refusal to even take up the question of the release of the political prisoners as a response to the call . . . or as a gesture of goodwill to improve the atmosphere for the resumption of peace negotiations indicates that she is in the clutches of the military who, together with Estrada, had launched and implemented the all-out war policy against the people and the revolutionary forces," Jalandoni said.

He noted that Gen. Angelo Reyes, who abandoned Estrada only at the last moment when People Power II was at its peak "remains the AFP Chief of Staff, even if he was the principal executor of Mr. Estrada's disastrous all-out war policy."

Jalandoni claimed that Ms Macapagal's statement at Camp Aguinaldo and the Philippine Military Academy calling on soldiers to continue the fight against guerrillas "is an extremely negative signal with regard to the resumption of peace negotiations."

"It carries the bad taste of Mr. Estrada and General Reyes' all-out war policy," he said.

He said in view of Ms Macapagal's refusal to heed pleas for the release of political prisoners, "it is preposterous for Acting Defense Secretary General Eduardo Ermita to declare that the New People's Army should first release the prisoners of war, Army Major Noel Buan and Police Major Abelardo Martin, without any conditions."

He urged the Macapagal administration to show respect for the political prisoners and their families, for the human rights organizations and churches and other groups that call for the swift and unconditional release of political prisoners.

"It must take decisive steps to bring Mr. Estrada to justice, respond to the people's demands, including (taking) definite steps toward the resumption of peace negotiations with the revolutionary forces," the NDF official said. ***Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Witness vs Joma, NDF escapes from hospital

ILAGAN, Isabela—A female member of the New People's Army, who earlier agreed to turn state witness against communist leaders Jose Ma. Sison and Luis Jalandoni and 10 rebels for the ambush of an Army brigade commander and 12 of his men in Jones town last year, escaped from a military hospital in Echague town Monday.

Reports said Sheryll Arcilla, 21, alias Ka Andrea, slipped through the backdoor of the Camp Melchor de la Cruz Hospital.

Army soldiers have been sent to the villages of Echague to re-capture Arcilla, a Polytechnic University of the Philippines student before she joined the NPA.

Arcilla reportedly asked permission from hospital guards to go to the bathroom. But Arcilla did not immediately return, prompting hospital officials to alert soldiers and send flash alarms to military units.

Vast fields and banana plantations surround the hospital premises while a knee-high barbed wire fence surrounds the compound.

Maj. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, 5th Infantry Division commander, admitted they would have a hard time pinning down the suspects in the ambush-slaying of Col. Josefino Manayao and 12 of his men unless they recapture Arcilla.

"It has a big effect on the case because she was at the ambush scene," Garcia said. ***Villamor Visaya Jr. PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Serge asks Gloria to recall Garcia appointment in GSIS

BY JHUNNEX NAPALLACAN
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY–Sen. Sergio "Serge" Osmeña III is asking President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to reconsider the appointment of fellow Cebuano Winston Garcia as president and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System.

"I'm filing a complaint or a letter with the Office of the President, complaining and asking the reconsideration of the designation of Winston Garcia as president of GSIS," Osmeña said in a telephone interview.

Ms Macapagal, the senator said, should instead appoint Clarissa Ocampo, executive vice president of the Equitable PCI Bank, to the GSIS position.

Ocampo, the prosecution's star witness, had testified during the impeachment trial that former President Estrada deposited P500 million in the name of Jose Velarde.

Osmeña said Ocampo is "very qualified" to hold the GSIS post because she was the executive vice president for the trust division of PCI-Equitable Bank.

He also said Ocampo has 30 years of experience in banking and is "honest and courageous."

If Ocampo would not get the GSIS post, Osmeña said there are other retired bank managers who are equally qualified for the position.

But Osmeña said he would not officially endorse anyone to the President because he did not want to create an impression that he wanted to lobby for his own nominee.

Garcia, son of Cebu Gov. Pablo Garcia, has appealed to the senator to give him a chance to prove that he was capable of managing the GSIS.

The Garcias belong to Promdi, a member of the United Opposition. They are also allies of former Cebu Gov. Emilio "Lito" Osmeña, Promdi chair who has announced his plans to run for senator in the May elections.

Lito Osmeña is not in good terms with his cousin, Serge, who is seeking reelection.

Serge reiterated that Garcia, a former board member, is a lawyer and has no background in banking and finance or even in pension plans.

Another reason why he was objecting to Garcia's appointment was Garcia's alleged involvement in irregularities during the Ramos administration.

Serge said he agreed with his cousin, Sen. John "Sonny" Osmeña that Garcia took part in the aborted GSIS reinsurance deal during the Ramos administration.

Serge said he knew about this as early as 1993. He said that he got the information from a very reliable source and he had "direct testimonial evidence."

But Garcia denied the allegation, saying he would file another libel case against Sonny Osmeña. He asked for a copy of a taped interview with Sonny to support his complaint.

Garcia said he never had any deals with the GSIS before and that he was not powerful to be able to pull off such a deal.

Sonny, he added, was just jealous that many Cebuanos were appointed into key government posts through Lito Osmeña, Sonny's estranged younger brother.

"If there's a racket there (at the GSIS), then I will stop it," Garcia said.

Mayon folk won't heed advice to leave area

BY JOB BELEN
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI City—Despite repeated warnings from local authorities, residents in the six-kilometer permanent danger zone (PDZ) refuse to go to safer areas or resettlement sites. They believe Mayon volcano would not erupt yet.

Resident volcanologist Ed Laguerta told the INQUIRER on Monday that Mayon is expected to erupt within the month, if its abnormal behavior such as ash puffing, tremors and sulfur dioxide emission continues to intensify.

But residents interviewed by the INQUIRER said they have yet to see signs that Mayon would erupt.

Cresenciana Buenconsejo, a resident of Nagsipit, a village in Tabaco within the danger zone, said the exodus of wild animals usually precedes an eruption.

She recalled that in the February 2000 eruption, snakes and wild pigs were seen coming down the volcano.

Roberto Bilolo, a farmer and resident of Barangay Calbayog in Malilipot town, said if the government would force them to evacuate, he would transfer only his family but would remain in his farm. He said he would refuse if asked to evacuate at this time.

"It is better to stay in our home than at the evacuation center," he said.

The Albay Provincial Safety Office (PSO) has alerted its counterparts in the municipal and the barangay levels for possible evacuation.

Col. Dante Bonifacio, 202nd Infantry Brigade commander, has sent 10 trucks to the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council center at Camp Gen. Simeon Ola for the use of the Joint Task Force Mayon in case of an evacuation.

Chief Supt. Marcelo E. Navarro, RDCC chair and Bicol police chief, yesterday called a meeting of the council to check on the preparations being done by its members and the Municipal Disaster Coordinating Councils.

In Tabaco, residents of Barangays Buang and Magapo were given instructions to immediately go to the Buang Elementary School and the Oson Elementary School in case of an eruption.

Residents of Barangay Calbayog have been instructed to use the San Jose Elementary School. ***With a report from Rey Nasol, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

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Jailed MILF suspects appeal for freedom

DAVAO CITY—Detained suspected members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front appealed to both the government and the MILF leadership to work for their immediate release even before the resumption of peace negotiations.

The 29 detainees, who are languishing in the municipal jails of Mati and Tarragona in Davao Oriental since June last year, insisted that they are not members of the MILF.

The detainees claimed that they were used as "fall guys" by the police after authorities failed to catch real MILF members responsible for the series of attacks against Army, police and paramilitary units in Davao Oriental.

Carlos Isagani Zarate, the detainees' legal counsel, said the inmates are ordinary farmers and fishermen in the Moro-dominated Barangays Tagabaid and Tomaong in Tarragona, and had nothing to do with the MILF.

"We appeal to the leadership of the MILF and the government to work for the immediate release of these detainees even before they sit down and start the talks. They are innocent people, their case should be given priority by both the MILF and the government," Zarate said.

Zarate added that due process had not been properly observed when they were picked up by the police since they were arrested without warrants.

He said the detainees were randomly tagged by an alleged MILF surrenderer whom police placed in a heavily tinted van parked near their community in Tarragona.

Zarate said all the men in the community were ordered to line up near the van as the man pointed to them as alleged participants in the series of MILF attacks against government troopers in Davao Oriental in June and July last year.

The release of the prisoners will serve as a "gesture of goodwill" on the part of the Macapagal administration and win back the confidence of Moro residents, Zarate said. ***Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

RIZA MANANSALA

GLORIA IN MANAOAG

In her first provincial trip as President, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo visits the Our Lady of Manaoag Church in Pangasinan with former President Corazon Aquino and Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

24 'Chavit cops' to be reinstated

VIGAN, Ilocos Sur—Twenty-four policemen who were reassigned to Mindanao and the Visayas due to their supposed closeness to Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson can now heave a sigh of relief after Singson said they can return to the province soon.

Singson said the reassignment papers of the 24 policemen, known in the Philippine National Police as "Chavit Boys," are being processed and they can be reinstated to their old positions in the province by February.

Police officials relieved the 24 policemen last year in the wake of Singson's *jueteng* revelations against ousted President Estrada.

No official reason was given for the relief except that the policemen were perceived as Singson's supporters.

The policemen were reassigned to the police offices in Western and Eastern Visayas; in Western, Northern and Central Mindanao, Caraga and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Among these policemen are officers with the ranks of superintendent and inspectors.

"We were thrown out (of Ilocos Sur) and were placed in a precarious situation," said one of the policemen who requested not to be identified to avoid reprisal from his superiors.

"We knew it was well-planned because our new colleagues knew why we were sent there."

Most of them, upon being given new assignments, filed for immediate leaves of absence.

But reports here said those who were not allowed to go on leave experienced harassment from police officials in their new assignments.

The policemen were taunted during their regular formations and were given odd jobs like sweeping the premises of their offices.

The policemen said they were certain that they would soon be assigned to handle dangerous assignments that would place their lives in danger.

Gripped with fear and pressure, some of them planned to seek early retirement. ***Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Hopes revived for release of NPA captives

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—Cielo and Noelle Jenina Francesca Buan on Monday filled themselves with excitement and joy—the first of such feelings they enjoyed during the 18 months that communist guerrillas kept captive Army Maj. Noel Buan in Southern Luzon.

For the mother and daughter, happiness is beginning to replace anguish as the New People's Army on Sunday announced its readiness to release Buan and Chief Insp. Abelardo Martin, police chief of Dolores, Quezon.

The release was a "gesture of sincerity" to reopen peace talks with the Macapagal administration, according to Satur Ocampo, former National Democratic Front spokesperson.

"We are very excited. It's (the release) almost coming. Both parties are amenable to talk about the details. *Detalye na lang ang pinag-uusapan,*" Cielo, 36, told the INQUIRER by telephone from Fort Bonifacio where she and her daughter live.

Buan's relatives in Arayat town, 15 kilometers east of this town, were also anticipating the immediate release of the Army major, according to Arayat Mayor Benigno Espino.

Buan, at the time of his abduction by the NPA's Melito Glor Command in July 1999, was the intelligence chief of the Army's Southern Luzon Command based in Lucena City. He was a member of Class 1984 of the Philippine Military Academy.

Martin was abducted on Nov. 3, 1999.

For Jenina, now 12, there will be no more sad birthdays and Christmases.

She has prepared a schedule of activities for her and her father, Cielo said.

"She's almost five feet tall. She's grown up much and Noel has missed so much of her growing up," Cielo said.

With the impending release, Cielo said Jenina would finally stop asking when her father is coming home.

In parties that Cielo organized for Jenina's birthdays on Dec. 7, 1999 and last year, Jenina had only one wish—to see her father alive, to have him back home.

The mother and child tied big, yellow ribbons in and around their house. They sent communications by e-mail and phone calls to the NDF office in The Netherlands where Jose Maria Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines, is based.

Before his capture, Noel, 38, religiously managed to take a break from the service to be by her daughter's side during her birthday and on Christmas.

Cielo said she last talked with her husband on the night of July 7, 1999. Since then, the couple communicated only through letters that the NPA delivered to Cielo through couriers.

"The release of my husband and Chief Inspector Martin has long been overdue," she said.

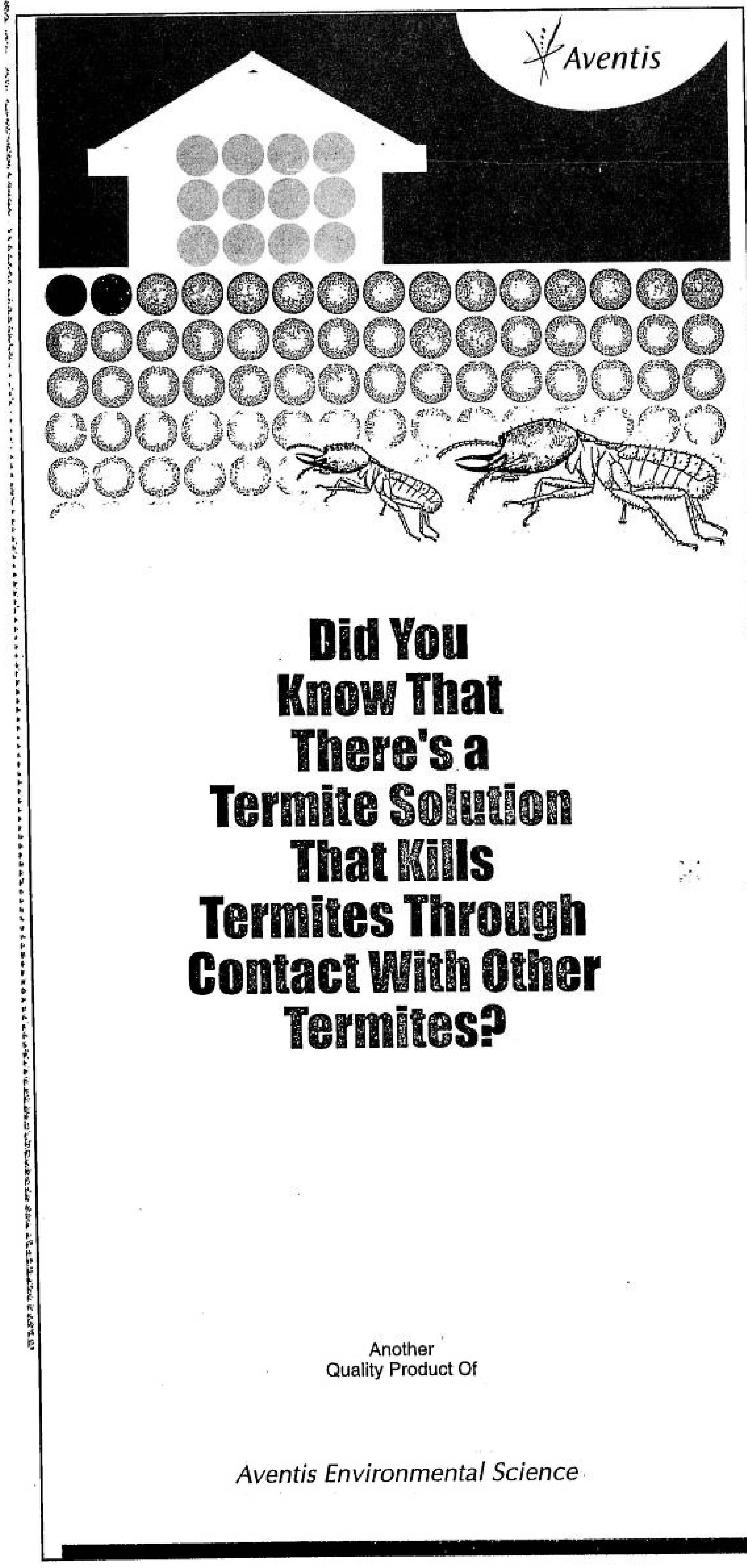
In between the long and agonizing wait, Cielo said she had not, even for once, lost hope.

Cielo attributed the possible release of the two to "girl power."

She was referring to herself, to Martin's wife Nenita, to Sen. Loren Legarda and to President Macapagal-Arroyo who, according to her, was a "President who understands."

"Senator Legarda as well as the bishops have helped us and Nenita see through all these," she said.

When Legarda took her and Nenita to Malacañang on Friday, Cielo said the President "held tight (our) hands."



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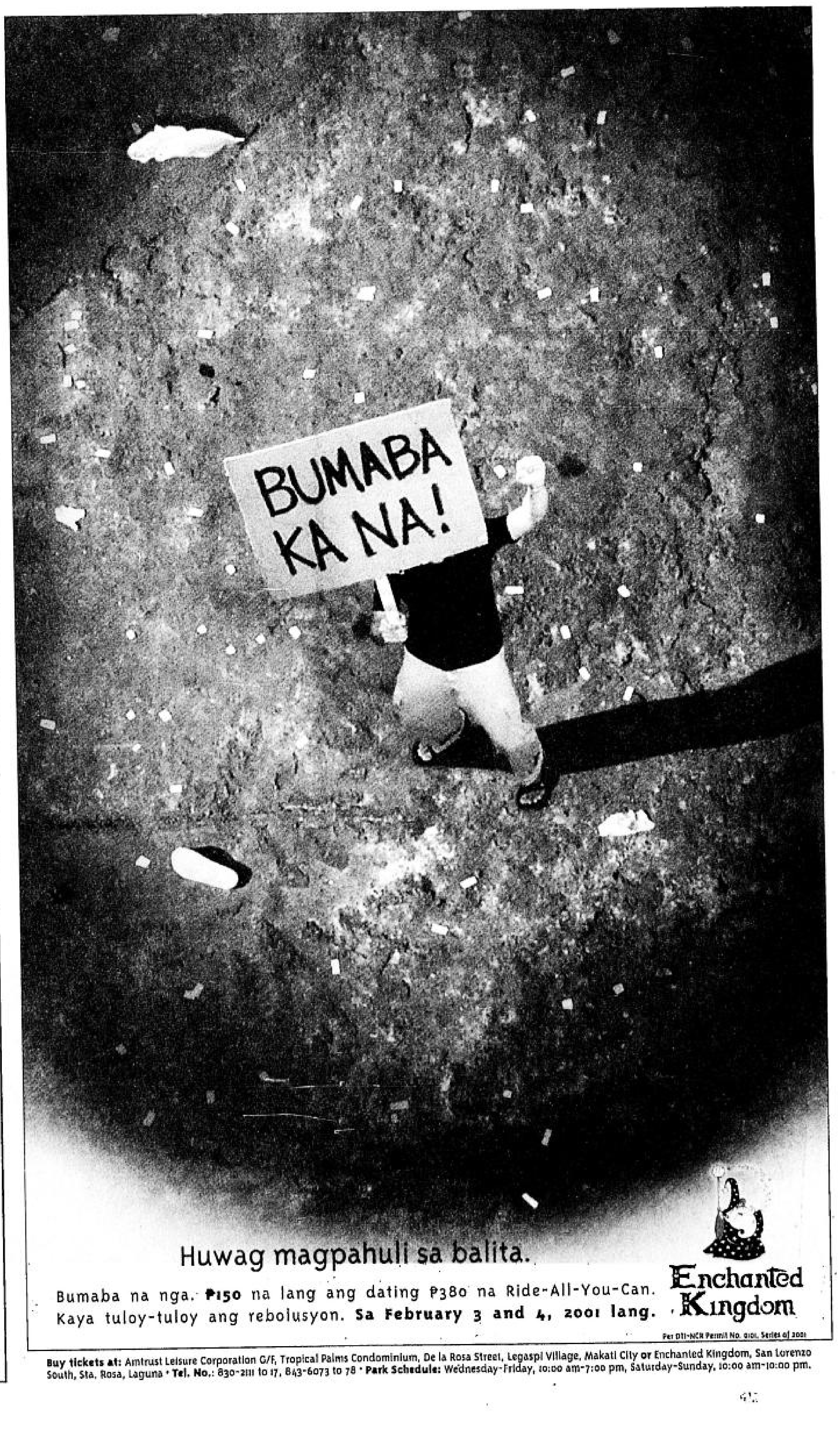

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Agarao kin hit suspect's escape

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—Relatives of murdered lawyer Clarence Agarao, husband of Carina Agarao of the Crusade Against Violence based in Manila, have expressed disgust over the "alibis" being given by authorities on the confessed triggerman's escape.

After waiting for justice for about four years and shocked by the jailbreak of the principal suspect who had tagged a mastermind, immediate relatives seemed reluctant to talk to reporters.

"Benjie Agarao, a former provincial board member and younger brother of Clarence, is not as vocal about the recent turn of events related to his brother's murder case," Artemio Baltazar, 87, the sickly father-in-law of the younger Agarao, said on Sunday.

A barangay captain for 30 years since the 1950s, Baltazar expressed amazement over how easy it was for lone suspect Luisito San Juan to bolt jail single-handedly if the latter had no connection with the higher-ups.

He, however, declined to elaborate.

The INQUIRER tried several times to talk to Agarao and has requested him, through his wife Tita, to make a return call but nothing has been heard from him since Friday.

Tita Agarao has also declined to comment about the recent developments surrounding the late Agarao's case, saying her husband is leaving to his late brother's widow, Carina, the lobbying and crusading for Clarence's case. *Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Kidnap victim's kin won't cooperate

ISABELA, Basilan—The family of kidnap victim 6-year-old April Rasul Grant refused to cooperate with government authorities, police and military officials here said.

Supt. Ahmadul Pangambayan, provincial police chief, said the victim's mother, Mina, has stopped coordinating with the police.

"If she is indeed negotiating, she does not (inform us of) the developments," Pangambayan said.

Col. Saulito Aromin, 103rd Army Brigade chief, expressed the same observation.

"They don't cooperate with us. We gave them a chance to negotiate but until now they have not informed us of the developments of the said negotiations," Aromin said.

Aromin said even without the family's go-signal, the military launched its rescue operations.

"It is also our responsibility to rescue the girl," he added.

He said a certain John or Jun Conetas, a first cousin of the victim's mother, was behind the abduction.

Aromin said if the girl was rescued, her mother will be "invited for questioning."

Reports from the Lamitan town police station said the kidnappers, allegedly some of them relatives of the victim, had reduced their ransom demand from P2.5 million to P500,000.

"And we learned that (Mina) is directly negotiating with the kidnappers," Aromin said.

Earlier reports said the abduction stemmed from a land dispute. *Julie Alipala-Inot, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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'VINDICTIVE PRESIDENT'

Lapid says Pampanga given new hope after Erap ouster

SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—An optimistic Gov. Manuel Lapid on Monday presented a six-point agenda for Pampanga that, he said, were not realized during the "vindictive presidency" of Joseph Estrada but which could be accomplished under President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, a *kabalen* (province mate).

In the provincial agenda are the dredging of the mouth of the Guagua-Pasac River, the full operation of the Clark International Airport, the influx of more investments to the Clark Special Economic Zone and the implementation of livelihood projects in Mt. Pinatubo resettlement sites.

Lapid also wants the Angeles City-Porac Bridge constructed. He also wants the provincial government to regain the management of the quarry industry.

He described these thrusts as "crucial" in the economic development not only of Pampanga but also the rest of Central Luzon.

"I haven't asked or will not ask anything from the President that will benefit me personally. These are for the people," the movie actor-turned-governor told the INQUIRER in Kapampangan.

The fall of Estrada in People Power II also ended almost three years of neglect of Pampanga, Lapid said.

Estrada and Lapid were close friends until Lapid bolted the Nationalist People's Coalition before the May 1998 elections.

The much-publicized feud, which Lapid tried to patch up but without success, proved to be a disadvantage not only to Lapid's political career but also to the disaster-battered province.

In the last two years, the governor saw himself hounded by two graft cases and two administrative complaints in connection with alleged scams surrounding quarry tax collections and the purchase of a P104-million land for the capitol's mass housing program.

Pampanga also received very limited support from the Estrada administration, Lapid claimed.

What Lapid failed to get for Pampanga were compensated by the efforts of congressmen and Lubao Mayor Lilia Pineda, vice president of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines.

They managed to draw P119 million for the desilting of lahar-choked waterways and other funds for major infrastructure projects, like the P3.5-billion Japanese-funded lahar mitigation works.

The Natural Resources Development Corp. of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources contributed P280 million in quarry taxes to the provincial coffers.

Lapid found the amount too paltry and the NRDC's collection system replete with reports of irregularities.

The rise to the presidency of Ms Macapagal, whose father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal was from Lubao town, signaled a fresh hope for the province, he said.

He said he would not ask the President to help him be cleared of graft and administrative charges.

"She knows I am innocent, that these were only politically motivated," Lapid said.

While not supporting the vice gubernatorial bid of Juan Miguel Arroyo or Mikey, the President's eldest son, Lapid said Mikey could be the "province's bridge to Malacañang."

He hastened to add, however, that it would not be him but the President and the members of the Lakas-NUCD national directorate who would decide who his running mate would be.

"I am optimistic not because she is a Kapampangan. I think it is the best time to aspire for significant changes in the province because, as she said, she wanted to be a good President," Lapid said in Kapampangan. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Mayor who shot hostage taker scot-free

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The Cebu Provincial Police Office (CCPO) is not keen on filing charges against Mayor James Abines of Santander town for the shooting and wounding of a hostage-taker on Jan. 14.

Senior Supt. Jose Antonio Salvacion, CCPO chief, said not a single witness showed up to testify that Abines shot Jeffrey Acero, 29, shortly after Acero took hostage a nine-year-old boy in Barangay Liloan, Santander, 134.4 kilometers south of this city.

He said he personally went to Barangay Liloan but no one was willing to talk about what happened, he added.

Abines admitted shooting Acero in the shoulder after Acero stabbed the boy. The mayor said Acero was still holding the boy when he shot Acero.

Salvacion said police initially planned to file at least three criminal charges against Abines—serious physical injury, illegal possession of firearms and violation of the ban on carrying of firearms during the election period.

If Acero would not file a case against Abines, Salvacion said the police might be forced to close the case. Until now, he added, Acero had not indicated that he planned to press charges against the mayor.

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ROUNDUP

Fishermen yield shabu

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—The Bolinao police seized 4.5 kilos of shabu from fishermen who claimed that they found the illegal drug floating near the Balingasay Beach in the town. Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, Pangasinan police director, said the shabu was a part of seven plastic containers with more than 10 kilos each that landed in the waters off Bolinao on Dec. 28 last year. Seized from the house of one of the suspects, Robert Amarillo, were P60,740 in cash and remnants of the shabu.
Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Illegal recruiters alarm NBI

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—The National Bureau of Investigation expressed alarm over the proliferation of recruiters for non-existent jobs in the province. Lawyer Norman Taloza, NBI chief here, said more than 50 victims have filed illegal recruitment and estafa cases against four people representing several fake recruitment companies. He said the suspects continue to operate in the villages despite the issuance of warrants for their arrest.
Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Checkpoints set up

BAMBANG, Nueva Vizcaya—Army soldiers and Citizens Armed Geographical Unit members have put up checkpoints along highways in Barangays Macate and Tophill here to enforce the firearms ban of the Commission on Elections. Col. Inocencio Mayangao, commanding officer of the Army's 54th Infantry Battalion, said the troops were sent to the villages to conduct searches of firearms among commuters in preparation for the May 14 elections.
Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Homes for the homeless

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—New houses built under Phase II of the Lingayen Gulf Resettlement Project of the National Housing Authority and the provincial government have been completed and ready for distribution, the provincial housing and urban development coordinating office (PHUDCO) said. PHUDCO chief Alvin Bigay said the resettlement area is a foreshore land in Barangay Pangapisan consisting of 1.7 hectares and which could accommodate 110 families. The NHA and the provincial government spent P2.5 million for land development.
Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FATHER'S pride. Hilario Davide Sr., now 96, proudly holds a picture of his son, Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. FILE PHOTO

Davide to turn back on politics after life at SC

CEBU CITY—Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. has shut the door to politics and plans to return to his hometown and live the life of a farmer and writer once he retires from the judiciary in year 2005 at age 70.

Davide, 65, said he does not intend to run for any elective position even after his retirement because he prefers to live a quiet life in Barangay Colawin, Argao town, 66.7 kilometers south of here.

"I will also be doing volunteer work and joining nongovernment organizations. I am a member of the Knights of Columbus. Perhaps I might be more active," he said in an interview on Sunday.

The idea of becoming the country's next President doesn't appeal to him despite his popularity brought about by his impressive handling of the impeachment trial of ousted President Estrada.

Davide was chosen "Filipino of the Year 2000" by the INQUIRER.

The honor is conferred by the INQUIRER to a Filipino who made the most positive impact on the life of the nation.

Mobbed

When he made an unexpected appearance at an inter-school debate among law students at the Capitol Social Hall Friday, students were scampering to either shake his hands or have him autograph their law books.

It was Davide's first visit to Cebu since he swore in Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as the country's 14th President on Jan. 20 at the Edsa Shrine.

His popularity did not change this man from Barangay Colawin who, as a schoolboy, once walked barefoot to school, determined to become a lawyer one day.

"I have no political ambition because as a matter of fact, if I begin to have that ambition now, everybody will suspect my motive," said Davide.

His father, Hilario Sr., 96 and a retired public school teacher, does not relish the idea of his son, a former legislator, joining politics again.

"Dong Jun" (Davide) was destined to become the Chief Justice of the Philippines, he said with a tone of finality.

Davide has six siblings, who are all professionals. His mother, Josefa, died in 1996.

Davide was elected delegate to the 1971 Constitutional Convention representing the 4th district of Cebu. He was one of three delegates who introduced the biggest number of reform proposals.

In 1978, he was elected assemblyman of the Batasang Pambansa under the banner of the opposition Pusyon Bisaya Party. His term ended in 1984.

At the Batasan, Davide fought the Marcos dictatorship by filing resolutions urging the regime to lift martial law and initiating investigations of alleged irregularities in the government and violations of human rights.

In 2001, Davide gained again the respect of many Filipinos because of his display of impartiality and objectivity in handling the impeachment trial.

But Davide said the impeachment trial, the first in Asia, must be a lesson to be learned by all the Filipinos.

"One lesson to be learned from the impeachment process is to educate voters in the matter of choosing government officials," he said.

"All impeachable officials must be all on their toes and must always resolve to adhere faithfully to the mandate of the Constitution that the public office is a public trust because there is a process to remove them," he added.

Abrupt end

The impeachment trial never reached its conclusion after the Senate tribunal voted not to open the second "Jose Velarde" envelope that would have shown more alleged secret accounts of ousted President Estrada.

The vote sparked People Power II that led to Estrada's downfall.

Davide said there would be no need for him and the senator-judges to reconvene to officially terminate the case.

The Senate has decided to pass a resolution declaring the official termination of the case. Davide is waiting for the Senate resolution.

The Chief Justice refused to comment on the legal issues raised on the assumption of Ms Macapagal into the presidency.

There are two pending cases on the matter filed with the Supreme Court. *Jolene Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Quezon trash dump plan opposed

LUCENA CITY—Officials and residents of Agdangan town in the third district of Quezon are strongly opposing a recent pronouncement of Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Benjamin Abalos to make their municipality a dumping ground of Metro Manila's garbage.

Mayor Augusto Pobeda said his constituents were apprehensive about Abalos' reported plan.

"I have not heard anything from anyone in the MMDA about this proposed plan and it's ridiculous to include our municipality among those that will address the garbage problem of Metro Manila even without conducting a consultation with us, local officials," Pobeda said.

He said the municipal council had passed an ordinance approving the town's land-use plan and there was not a single provision about converting land for a landfill or dump.

At present, Pobeda said, the town's landfill occupies only about 1,000 square meters in Barangay Silangan Kalutan.

Agdangan, with a population of 11,000 and composed of 12 barangays, is 30 kilometers south of Lucena. It has an area of 3,500 hectares of land.

"With this minimal land area, how can we able to accommodate the garbage from Metro Manila when it produces six tons of waste every day?" Pobeda asked.

He said the town has villages, which are considered havens for tourists. These are Binagbag, Salvacion, Kalutan and Kanluran and Silangan Silduran.

On Jan. 12, four barangays in Pasay City were able to dump 19 truckloads of garbage in Barangay Kalyaat in Lucban, Quezon.

Lucban, considered the summer capital of Quezon because of its proximity to Mt. Banahaw, has about 40 natural springs, which are the sources of potable water of residents in Tayabas, Pagbilao and Lucena.

Lucban Mayor Serafin Dator told local TV station STV-6 that he only accommodated the request of his townmate Roy Ver, who is the contractor of garbage collection in Pasay. *Arnel Avila, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Resolution to support the appointment of SENATOR FRANKLIN M. DRILON as Vice President of the Philippines

Your Excellency
MADAME GLORIA M. MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President of the Republic of the Philippines
Malacañan Palace
Manila

Dear **MADAME PRESIDENT**:

We, the concerned members of the various civic and non-government organizations from Western Visayas, request Your Excellency to grant us this privilege to endorse the appointment of **SENATOR FRANKLIN M. DRILON** as **VICE PRESIDENT** of the Republic of the Philippines.

At this crucial stage of our democracy, the country needs men and women of proven integrity, competence and dedication to public service. We need public servants whose commitment to efficient and honest delivery of service to our people transcends political expediency. We have to have leaders with clear vision, guided by a high sense of values, and motivated by loftier impulses. Sen. Drilon, through the years, had proven that he has all these qualities so vital to restore and maintain our people's faith in government. His record as Cabinet Member and Senator can stand the strictest public scrutiny. His achievements and accomplishments have been well-applauded by practically all sectors of society.

We, in the Visayas, do not want to be left out of the tremendous task of rebuilding our tarnished institutions and restoring our people's dreams and aspirations. We would like our people to know and see that we, too, desire to play a major role to ensure the success of Your Excellency's stewardship. It is for this singular reason that we would like to offer the best we have to stand by the side of Your Excellency's administration, and that he will bring honor and prestige to the Office of the Vice President.

Madame President, we sincerely thank you for hearing us out and giving our recommendation and endorsement your utmost consideration.

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon
JUN BANDAYREL, Editor ■ ROLANDO B. FERNANDEZ, Bureau Chief

DANGER still lurks in the fishing grounds of Bolinao in western Pangasinan one year after a Singaporean cargo ship grounded on coral reefs and spilled bunker oil. RIZA MANANSALA

Bolinao seeks environmental justice

Oil spill continues to bring disaster to Pangasinan's coastal town

BY YOLANDA FUERTES
Pangasinan

A YEAR after a cargo vessel grounded on a coral reef and spilled thousands of liters of oil into the fishing ground of Bolinao, Pangasinan, the municipal government and local fishermen are still waiting for compensation.

On Jan. 23, 2000, the Singaporean cargo vessel, MV Nol Schedar, sailed through the waters off Bolinao to deliver coal to the Sual power plant. It hit a coral bed and spilled 57,000 liters of bunker oil.

Bolinao Mayor Jesus Celeste said the accident has brought environmental havoc to the town's fishing industry and has continued to bring disaster.

In November last year, a massive fish kill struck fishpens in Barangay Pilar, one of the six villages affected by the oil spill.

Celeste said big waves could have stirred the oil that had settled at the bottom, polluting the waters and killing more than P10 million worth of *bangus* (milkfish) being cultured in the pens.

P200-M suit

"The fish kill could occur over and over again as oil is non-biodegradable, stays in the area for years, and makes an appearance to create disaster," he said.

The vessel crushed corals spread over some 2,700 sq. m. of the Pudoc Reefs (which are part of the Bolinao-Anda reef system), according to a report of the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute (UPMSI), which maintains a laboratory in Bolinao.

The spill also damaged the UPMSI's mangrove research area in Barangay Pilar and the sea urchin culture pilot project in Barangay Victory.

The local government filed a P200-million damage suit against Neptune Orient Lines Ltd., owner of the vessel.

The amount was based on estimates cited in the studies of the UPMSI.

The Philippine Coast Guard and the fishpen operators also filed separate damage suits.

But Neptune filed countercharges against the local government for allegedly directly causing the vessel's grounding. It accused local authorities of "negligence or (committing a) wrongful act because there were no navigational aids."

"Proper buoys or markers were not placed in the area despite the full knowledge of government authorities of the clear dangers posed to navigation by the unmarked 14-mile reef," the company said.

Nepture also denied that the cargo vessel spilled oil. It countered that the suit filed against it was without sufficient legal and factual bases.

The company said the amount of damage was a "haphazard guess without any legal or scientific basis."

Moreover, it said the site of the accident was not a coral reef but a hard seabed of sand, with scattered areas of rocks that appear to be of volcanic origin.

"There is no evidence whatsoever of live corals at the grounding site or in the surrounding vicinity," the company said.

Local officials, however, noted that the accident occurred on the Pudoc Reefs, a part of the Bolinao-Anda coral reef system, which is known to have one of the most diversified coral species. The area is a traditional marine sanctuary and fishing ground for poor fishermen, they said.

The Department of Energy found similarities in the samples taken from the vessel's bunker oil and the spilt oil in Bolinao.

The Coast Guard, which conducted an underwater survey after the accident, found three holes at the ship's hull near the oil compartment.

"Besides, the Philippine Ports Authority confirmed that no other ships passed by Bolinao at that time," Celeste said.

The Coast Guard also said government authorities could not be blamed for the accident, saying that vessels plying the international route should not stray from the international lane.

"Each ship is equipped with maps, radars and other equipment so it has no reason to stray (from its designated lane)," the Coast Guard said.

University studies

A university commissioned by Neptune to prove that the vessel was not at fault reported that the grounding site was indeed a coral line area.

Documents furnished by Ayar Montemayor, a private lawyer hired by the Bolinao government to handle the oil spill case, showed that the dispute had become a battle of university studies.

The University-upon-Tyne in the United Kingdom, which was asked by Neptune to evaluate the environmental impact and damage of the vessel, said the grounding site was a coral reef, but it downgraded the damages.

"The grounding of the vessel impacted a total of 2,644 sq. m. of the Pudoc Reefs. Damage was not uniform and was restricted to five categories in three discrete areas," the university's Department of Marine Sciences and Coastal Management said.

"We estimate that total damage was contained within an area of 3,371 sq. m. of reef, but as the damage was extremely patchy, only 835 sq. m. of solid substratum capable of supporting coral growth were damaged. Total loss of coral cover was estimated at 47.3 sq. m.," the study said.

The university put losses in coral cover at $38,200 (P1.91 million) to $105,000 (P5.25 million). It based the amounts on those paid for previous grounding incidents in Florida and Puerto Rico.

The estimate is higher by P3 million than the company's original offer of P2 million. Still, the offer was not enough, Celeste said, adding that the local government had already spent more than P1 million in docket fees and other expenses in filing the damage suit before the regional trial court in Alaminos, Pangasinan.

The study of the University-upon-Tyne also showed that overfishing, destructive fishing using explosives and coral bleaching appeared to have heavily affected the surrounding reef, ranking it "among the most degraded in the Philippines."

"As such, the ecological impact of the grounding can be considered to be much less severe than if it had occurred on a pristine reef cover," it said.

"Given the current little coral cover in the surrounding areas and the general absence of major structural damage to the reef, we believe that the damaged area will recover to the state of adjacent reef areas within 10 to 20 years at the initial impact site, and five to 10 years at the grounding site."

The UPMSI thinks otherwise.

Dr. Perry Aliño, coordinator of the university's marine fishery resources management project, said that while the Univerity-upon-Tyne's survey of the site seemed to be sound, it was in the evaluation of the survey results where the differences in interpretation lies.

He said the study was conducted 10 months after the grounding incident. The impact based on the living coral cover was not sufficiently evaluated since many of the previous studies based their assessment on total habitat cover, he said.

Far from settled

"For example, the reef framework, whether living or dead, still functions as wave buffer. But if the reefs were scraped off or broken, this function would be diminished," he said.

He added that contrary to the University-upon-Tyne theory that corals can grow from only five to 20 years, UPMSI studies showed that the recovery of the corals was twice as long.

Aliño said it was "insensitive" to evaluate the corals in the "economic sense."

"(The reefs) can provide a greater life support system value (to fishermen) than what would have been estimated," he said.

Aliño also said there was difficulty in comparing with conditions 10 months after the accident and also with conditions in other areas (Florida and Puerto Rico).

"If a study was to be made and the impact evaluated, it would cost more than the proposed $105,000, considering the other extenuating issues attached to the grounding incident, such as the more widespread damage from the oil spill which (the company) has not admitted," he added.

Because of the UPMSI's advice that the amount offered was not acceptable at this stage, it might be best to hold the final settlement in abeyance until an improved expert opinion can be elicited.

Celeste earlier asked Neptune for an amicable settlement of the case.

"A long-drawn legal debacle remains an option but, in the long run, (it) may not alleviate our contentious interests," Celeste said in a letter to Lua Cheng Eng, Neptune chair.

Grace Fong-Wong, director of the company's insurance and risk management, rejected the request, saying Nol Schedar is entered with the UK P&I Club, the largest in the world.

"Under the system in which the International P&I Club operates, we are not in a position to dictate or recommend any terms of settlement to the UK P&I Club," she said.

The cargo vessel was able to sail out from the Subic ship repair yard in late March last year for more repair work in China.

Judge Edgardo Sundiam of the national capital judicial region ordered the discharge after the ship's owner posted two counter-bonds worth P12 million in favor of the Coast Guard, which filed the case against the company.

The ship's insurers also issued a letter of guarantee to the Bolinao government, securing the limits of its claims to P200 million.

'Walis tambo' as Baguio icon

BY DESIREE CALUZA
Baguio City

FOR THE PAST 50 years, the Baguio City public market has been known for its fresh vegetables, strawberries and the ubiquitous *walis tambo* (broom).

Residents and tourists alike have patronized the Baguio *walis tambo* because, as one of its dealers said, it has become a Baguio icon.

"You have not visited Baguio if you do not carry with you the Baguio *walis tambo*," says Victor Calimlim, chair of the Baguio Market Plaza Cooperative and a *walis tambo* dealer himself.

DAYTOY TI AMIANAN

Calimlim said that even if technology, in the form of electrical house gadgets like vacuum cleaners, is so common nowadays, sales from Baguio's *walis tambo* have not dropped.

He said the *walis tambo* industry has boomed over the past 50 years, making the Baguio broom reign in practically every household in the country.

In the Baguio public market alone, 15 to 20 stalls sell the brooms along with souvenir items such as woodcarvings and baskets.

Calimlim said it surprised him that no tourist had ever asked dealers where the brooms came from, maybe because of the word "Baguio City" woven on the broom's handle.

But the brooms are actually transported and delivered to Baguio only for marketing purposes.

According to Calimlim, the brooms are made in the towns of Tuba, Itogon, Sablan, Mankayan, Kapangan in Benguet, in Burgos, La Union, and in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya.

Makers from Bicol supply brooms to Baguio if those from Northern Luzon fail to meet the demand, he said.

These places, including some parts of Bicol, are the only areas that produce the brooms and where tiger grass (*Chysanonaena maxima*), the main material used, is grown.

Tiger grass is grown by farmers mainly for weaving the *walis tambo*, according to a study of the regional Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The study said Benguet farmers allotted at least three hectares of land to grow and cultivate tiger grass for the broom making industry.

The sight of farmers drying grass stalks along the cemented roadsides in Burgos and Naguilian towns in La Union is common.

The grass' fiber and flower are the main materials for the *walis tambo*.

While some people use tiger grass for making brooms, others use it for flower arrangements, said Fatima Pangan, science research specialist of the regional DENR.

Selling power

Calimlim said the varying sizes and designs of the *walis tambo* revealed the origin of the product.

The popular Benguet *walis tambo*, for example, has the "Baguio City" label woven on its wooden handle. This type, sold at P20 to P50 each, is woven with wires, and wood and plastic strips.

The most expensive is the Ifugao *walis tambo*. Sold at P150 each, the Ifugao walis is the most durable and could last several years.

The Bayombong *walis tambo*, made from tiger grass and rattan, is also popular because of its durability.

Mayor Eugenio Leon of Kapangan, Benguet, said his town was among the major producers of *walis tambo*. He could not recall, however, if his town was ever recognized for making the Baguio icon famous to tourists.

Leon said their weavers once tried to put "Kapangan" instead of "Baguio City" in its wooden handle.

"But we realized that no one would buy our *walis tambo* because tourists would still prefer the ones having the 'Baguio City' label," he said.

The price of *walis tambo* shoots up between October and December, when demand is higher than supply, Calimlim said.

But between January and the summer months, the price drops. Calimlim said prices also become "balanced" or regulated in the second quarter when farmers harvest the tiger grass. Prices can go down to P20 each. Some dealers sell it for P25, while others sell it for P100 for four pieces and for P90 for three pieces.

The brooms are also distributed to other parts of Luzon and Mindanao, but the biggest market is still Metro Manila, Calimlim said.

One can expect truckloads or at least 16,000 brooms being delivered to the Baguio market every week during the peak months, he said.

There would always be buyers of the famous product adopted by Baguio, he added.

"And why not? In *Pinoy* culture, we are not high-tech in cleaning the house. Your usual vacuum cleaner cannot remove the mud and sand, but the *walis tambo* can."

NOT really made in Baguio, the Baguio "walis tambo" is preferred over the vacuum cleaner in many Filipino households. TOOTS SOBERANO www.eai.com.ph

EAI Receives QS 9000 Certification

Messages

I congratulate Electronic Assemblies, Inc. (EAI) for its continuing leadership in Quality Management in the country. In 1991 it was recognized as Most Outstanding Quality Company of the Year by the Philippine Society of Quality; in 1992 it was given the first ISO 9000 Certificate 0001 by the Bureau of Product Standards; in 2000 the ISO 14000 for Environmental Management System by the SGS; and this year 2001 the first QS 9000 certification for a Filipino owned PCBA company, also by SGS.

The continuing recognition of EAI's quality management system is a tribute to Filipino workers, engineers, and managers in this rapidly globalizing competitive environment.

Congratulations and More Power!

(SGD.) **FILEMON T. BERBA JR.**
Vice Chair and CEO
INTEGRATED MICROELECTRONICS, INC.
Senior Managing Director
AYALA CORPORATION

——o0o——

My warmest greetings and congratulations to ELECTRONIC ASEEMBLIES, INC. (EAI) for achieving the QS 9000 Quality Systems Certification.

Many electronics manufacturing companies in the world exercise aggressive stance in implementing customer-specific quality standards in addition to the ISO 9000 requirements. The QS 9000 aptly addresses this issue with the ultimate result being that variation and waste in the supply chain will be minimized, if not completely eliminated.

It is heartening to note that EAI has kept the profile of quality very high throughout and this new initiative will provide a fundamental quality management system that will position the company for greater customer satisfaction, profitability and competitiveness.

Once again, congratulations and *Mabuhay!*

(SGD.) **FRANCIS I. FERRER**
Group President
INTEGRATED MICROELECTRONICS, INC.

——o0o——

Once again, Electronic Assemblies, Inc. (EAI) marks another milestone in its unceasing quest for excellence, commitment to continuous improvement and leadership in quality with its formal certification to the QS 9000 Quality Standard.

Like our other quality certifications and awards, the certification is another first. It is our honor and pride to be the first Filipino-owned PCB assembly company to be certified to QS 9000 by SGS. But more than that, it reflects our commitment to push ourselves to higher levels of quality systems and consciousness for the benefit of all our stakeholders most especially our customers. The certification assures our customers that we are employing stricter standards of quality procedures in our assembly processes for their benefit.

For this, I commend all in EAI for another job well done. Congratulations to you all and more power.

(SGD.) **REI A. LACSON**
President
ELECTRONIC ASSEMBLIES, INC

Electronic Assemblies, Inc. (EAI), a member of the Ayala Group of Companies achieves yet another milestone as it becomes the first Filipino-owned company to be certified to QS 9000 by SGS. QS9000 Standard is a chartered quality management system that serves as a guide in achieving customer satisfaction in the field of automobile manufacturing.

This achievement is another first for EAI as a result of the company's continuous improvement, emphasizing defect prevention and the reduction of waste in the supply chain. Such pioneering feat has been the trademark of EAI as it likewise was the first company to be certified to ISO 9002 for Quality Management System by the Bureau of Product Standards in 1992 and the first Filipino company to receive the ISO 14001 Certification for Environmental Management from SGS in 2000.

EAI is the PCBA flagship company of Integrated Microelectronics Inc. (IMI), the umbrella company of the Ayala Group. for electronics manufacturing. Aside from its main headquarters in Laguna Technopark (LTI), it has another facility in Laguna International Industrial Park (LIIP).

Our Goal in 2000: QS 9000

Quality First! has been a continuous battle cry of EAI. That, plus the yearning to delight customers beyond their expectations encouraged the EAI management and staff to push their pursuit of quality at a higher level through the use of QS 9000 Standards.

QS9000 is a critical requirement that US automobile manufacturing giants such as Ford, General Motors and Chrysler consider in choosing their suppliers. This standard focuses on *"continuous improvement"* emphasizing on defect prevention and reduction of variation and waste in *the "supply chain"*. It consists of compliance to the ISO9002 requirements, Quality System Assessment, Production Parts Approval Process (PPAP) and the requirements of The Big 3 (Ford, General Motors and Chrysler). Compliance to this standard enhances productivity, reduces cost and increases profitability of the company and its partners. The standard's more systematic and proactive approach supports EAI's drive for continuous improvement, thus providing satisfied customers with products and services in the highest level of quality.

EAI's QS9000 team, composed of representatives from Central Quality Assurance, Engineering, Production, Modular Quality Assurance and Logistics was formed in January 2000. The team's core function was to evaluate the existing quality system and implement the additional requirement of the QS9000 standard for its two automotive lines.

During the preparation stage, the implementation was divided into three phases: Phase 1 was the initial assessment of the additional requirement of the standard. Here, the team conducted "gap analysis" to assess "where they are now" as far as the quality system is concerned. In phase 2, they bridged the gap between the existing system and additional requirement of the standard. And in phase 3 the team bought off the system together with the auditors.

It was in June of last year when the certifying body, SGS International Certification Services Canada, Inc. conducted the initial assessment. However, the final assessment was conducted last August.

Even in its early years, EAI has already adhered to QS9000 requirements: Failure Mode and Effect analysis (FMEA), Measurement System Analysis (MSA), Mistake Proofing (Poka Yoke), Control Plan and Statistical Process Control (SPC). Continuous improvement is also part of its Quality Policy.

The Fundamental Achievement

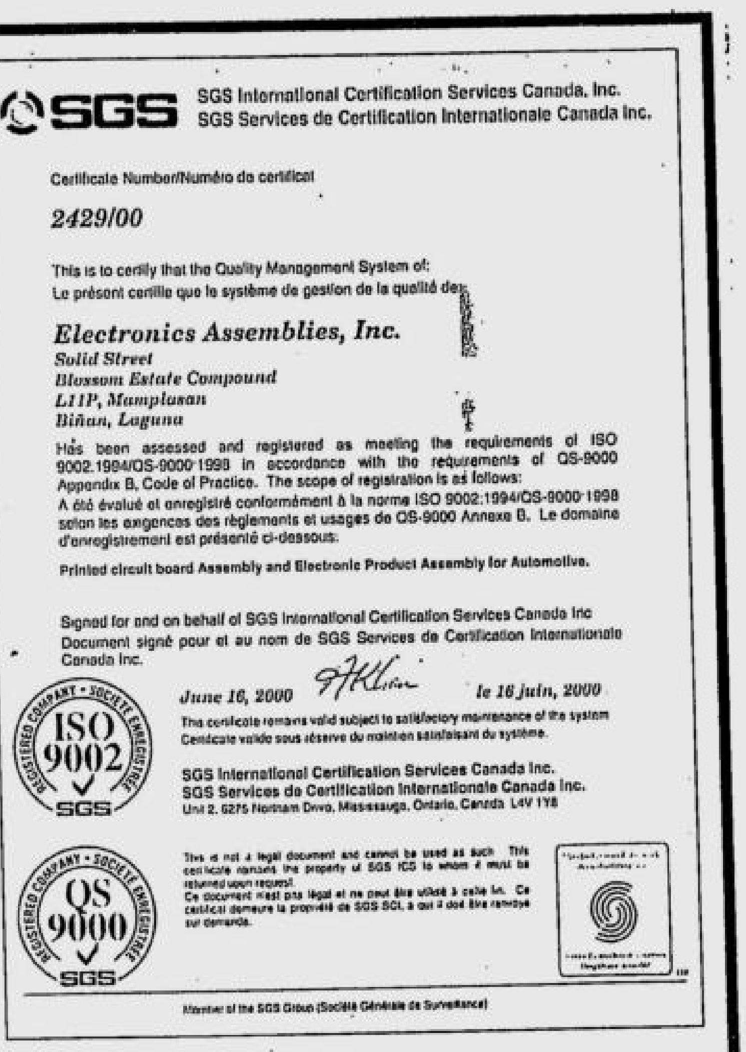
EAI's capabilities have evolved from through-hole and surface mount technology on rigid and flexible printed circuit boards to direct chip-attach technology to design and prototyping. EAI speaks of experience in the assembly and test of products whose applications are in telecommunications, automotive, computers and computer peripherals, industrial equipment, and consumer electronics.

EAI will be celebrating its 13th anniversary this year, and through those years it has always been a pioneer in achieving the best in terms of Quality Standards. It has gone a long way to be the leading Printed Circuit Board Assembly (PCBA) house in the Philippines, Such pioneering feat has been the trademark of EAI as it likewise was the first Filipino company that won the Outstanding Quality Company of the Year in 1991. EAI was also the first company to be certified to ISO 9002 by the Bureau of Product Standards in 1992. In the Centennial Year of 1998, EAI was one of the first companies to be awarded the Philippine Quality Award.

Its mission, *"to be the leading electronic manufacturing service provider as confirmed by our customers,"* is being pursued through the hard-work and the dedication of its workforce. Their success can be attributed to *vision with leadership, customer orientation, a well-disciplined methodology* and its *total commitment* to quality.

Its President, Mr. Rei Lacson puts it: "We can always be the best in the business if we are focused on our goals, and if we put quality alongside our goals." EAI's consistent and superb performance in many years has earned it numerous customer recognition and government awards: Sakata Plaque of Recognition, Rainbow Technology Strategic Supplier Award, Fujitsu, Uniden, Iomega and Analog Devices Supplier Recognition Award, Toshiba Plaque of Recognition, Motorola Supplier Excellence Award, Outstanding Quality Company of the Year Award, Philippine Quality Award, Golden Shell Award, 500 Million Dollar Export Club Award, and Environment-Friendly Award.

The QS 9000 is another commitment of EAI to the never ending journey for the highest levels of quality in order to bring it to the forefront of electronics manufacturing in the country.



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Le présent certifie que le système de gestion de la qualité de:

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Biñan, Laguna

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June 16, 2000 *le 16 juin, 2000*

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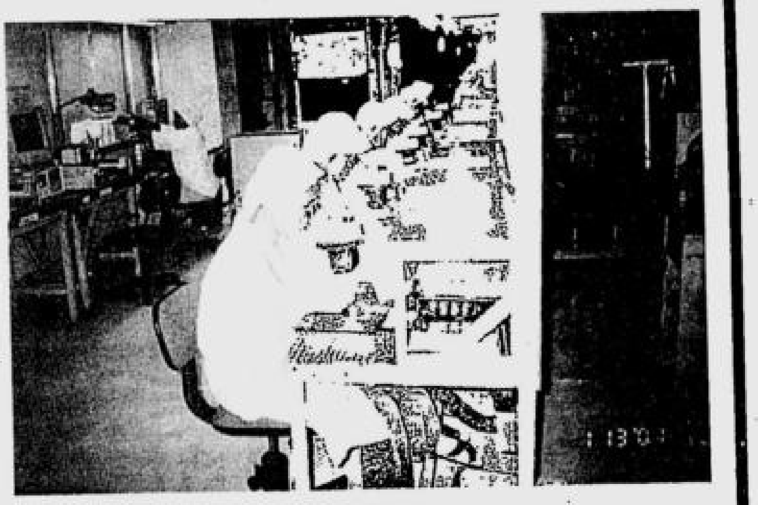
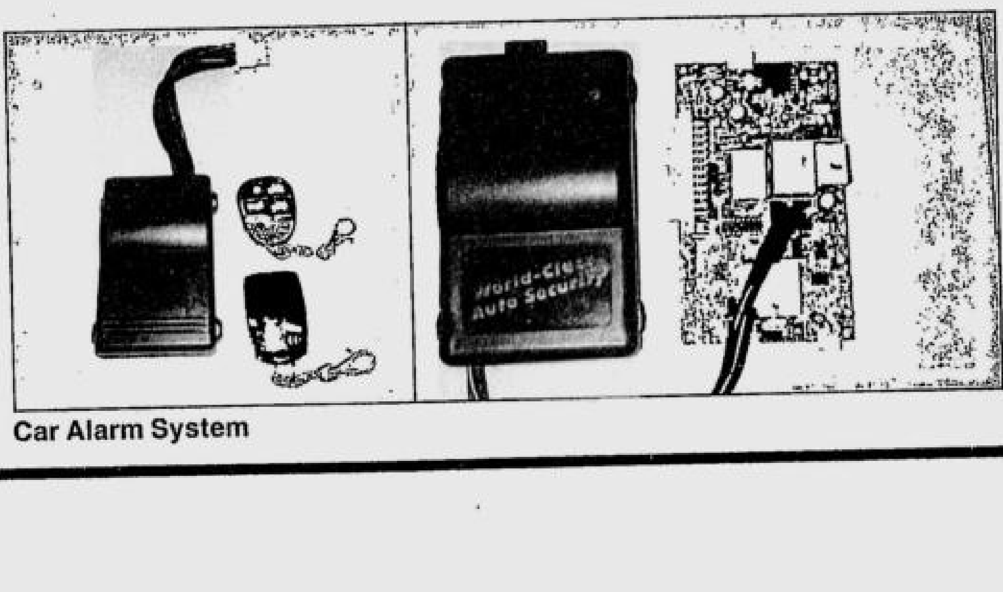


EAI Management Team (seated from L-R) Marketing & Operations Vice President Noel Ramirez, President Rei Lacson, Logistic Sr. Division Manager Joy Bondoc, BM2 Sr. Division Manager Gerry Velarde, AVP Technology Division Luke Mendoza, AVP MSAS Loloy Bañez (standing from L-R) AVP Finance Jimmy Sanchez, BM3 Sr. Division Manager Mandy Gareza, Marketing Manager Dave San Juan, HR Division Manager Rene De Ocampo, BM2 Product Manager Len-Len Viñas, AMG Division Manager Noel Cura, BM1 Manager Cyrus Cazeñas, Stratplan Sr. Manager Norman Paca, NIT Manager Bons Chan, CQA Division Manager Dondi Castañeda.

Electronic Assemblies, Inc. - LTI Bldg. (Head Office)

Electronic Assemblies, Inc. - LIIP Complex



Car Alarm System

GMA discards Abadia as security adviser

(From page A1)

but because I want to unburden the pain and anxiety of our President, who needs all our support and our faith," he added.

Like Caesar's wife

Various sectors have described Ms Macapagal's appointees as traditional politicians (*trapos*), recycled Cabinet men and "boys" of former President Fidel Ramos.

But the President said this was unfair, as "our Cabinet members were chosen on the basis of competence, integrity and dedication to serve the country."

She said she had instructed her Cabinet members to serve the people well and with transparency, and to be, "like Caesar's wife," above suspicion.

"I will not hesitate to do what must be done if they fail in all this," she declared.

On Mendoza's case, the President said she had instructed the DILG to coordinate with complaining anti-crime groups "to hear their side."

The groups led by the Crusade Against Violence had accused Mendoza of having had a hand in the escape from jail of the confessed killer of CAV president Carina Agarao's husband.

On Datumanong and Alvarez, Ms Macapagal said that more than their competence and integrity, she had appointed them as "a way of fleshing out our national concern for Mindanao."

"Their appointments to the key departments that deal with infrastructure are a fulfillment of a commitment that has long been denied our brothers in Mindanao," she said.

She reminded the public that the government must begin the task of rebuilding Mindanao, which has yet to recover from the war that the Estrada administration waged against the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

In any capacity

Abadia, a former chief of staff of the Armed Forces and chair of the RSBS, said he would go back to farming but was willing to serve "in any capacity" in the Macapagal administration.

"I told the President that if there is any destabilization move or coup attempt in the future, I will put my life on the line to defend her government, this Constitution and this democracy," he said.

He said he had served the government honorably, especially when he defended the first bloodless "People Power" revolt in 1986, and the Aquino administration that was fighting off a coup attempt in 1989.

Abadia said he presumed he had no pending graft case.

He said the Ombudsman did not ask him to submit an affidavit even if the Senate blue ribbon committee, which initially investigated the RSBS scam, had recommended the filing of charges against him and other military officials.

He pointed out that the case on the RSBS scam pending in the Supreme Court involved not himself, but other military officials.

As a parting shot to his critics, Abadia quoted from the Bible: "Do not judge, lest you be judged."

On Monday, Abadia showed reporters a document dated Jan. 29 and signed by the deputy ombudsman for the military clearing him of involvement in the RSBS scam.

That same day, Executive Secretary Renato de Villa defended Abadia whom he had recommended as national security adviser.

De Villa said Abadia was not charged before the Ombudsman or in court.

Earlier, Ms Macapagal acknowledged that Abadia had been helping her "immensely" since last October.

It was an apparent reference to the fight to oust then President Joseph Estrada following allegations that he had received bribes from "jueteng" operations and tobacco tax kickbacks.

Innocence

Various groups and persons, including retired Gen. Fortunato Abat and a group calling itself the "Concerned Employees of AFP-RSBS," had been urging Ms Macapagal to reconsider Abadia's appointment.

Orlando Mercado, who, as defense secretary, had initiated the investigation of Abadia's supposed involvement in the RSBS scam, quit last week to protest the appointment.

Abadia, however, continued to insist on his innocence.

Earlier yesterday, he sought out Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Minority Leader Teofisto Guingona Jr. to tell them that the Ombudsman had cleared him of complicity in the fund scam.

Pimentel and Guingona were not at the Senate when Abadia arrived to press his case.

The former had a speaking engagement at the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the latter was in Malacañang.

Talking with reporters later, Pimentel was unmoved by Abadia's lobbying. "It's not going to change anything. The finding (of the blue ribbon committee that he chairs) stays," he told reporters.

Told that the Ombudsman had cleared Abadia, Pimentel said: "The Ombudsman needs a new pair of eyeglasses."

Pimentel had also vocally opposed Abadia's appointment. The blue ribbon committee had recommended Abadia's indictment.

On the job

As he waited for Pimentel, Abadia told reporters that he would not quit despite the opposition to his appointment.

"No, I'm doing my job," he said. "I give (the President) daily intelligence briefs so that (she) will know our national security situation. I do that every morning—at 6 a.m. it is already with her. So this controversy will not prevent me from doing my job."

Abadia added: "I will clear my name in the eyes of the Filipino people because in my 35 years in service, my name was never tainted.

"I am beaten black and blue. I am being humiliated with accusations that have no significance."

Abadia said he went to Ombudsman Aniano Desierto on Monday and obtained a clearance issued by Orlando Casimiro, deputy ombudsman for the military.

"Records of this office indicate that you were not among those recommended to be indicted for violation of RA 3019, (the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act), and other cases related to the RSBS fund anomaly, for insufficiency of evidence," the clearance read.

"Hopefully, with this clearance, Senator Pimentel can help me put this issue to rest so I can move on and work for the President," Abadia said.

He said he was saddened by Abat's remarks against his appointment.

Abadia said he, Abat, De Villa and acting PNP Chief Mendoza had been in constant communication with one another because they had all worked for the military defection that led to Estrada's ouster.

"There were four generals working behind the scenes since October, but I did not grab credit (for my role)," he said.

Abadia also complained that Mercado merely used him as a reason to quit the administration.

"Why me?" he said. ***With a report from Juliet L. Javellana***

Loi's Senate run gets mixed reviews

(From page A1)

husband to "doing a Marcos" to speculating that the opposition is running out of candidates.

But most agreed that Ejercito would get "sympathy" votes as the "martyr" wife of a womanizing husband.

Unexpectedly, former President Fidel V. Ramos, a fierce critic of her husband, Joseph Estrada, virtually endorsed her candidacy.

When asked about it, he flashed the thumbs-up sign and hinted that Ejercito was qualified for the job.

"She was a very good first lady with a lot of guts and stability under pressure. Maybe, she deserves our vote," he told a briefing at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Ramos arrived about 5 p.m. from Switzerland where he attended the World Economic Forum as President Arroyo's representative.

"She's not really a politician but if the people call for it, she may," said Joseph Victor (JV) Ejercito, son of Estrada by Guia Gomez.

Confirmed

Sen. John Osmeña confirmed that allies of the ousted president are drafting Ejercito to the senatorial slate of the new opposition, which is composed of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP) led by Edgardo Angara, the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) and the Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP).

Ejercito's bid, along with the bids of 11 other senatorial candidates, will be announced during the PMP convention at Club Filipino tonight.

Estrada is expected to address the convention, his first public appearance since he "stepped down" on Jan. 20.

The PMP's initial senatorial candidates include reelectionist Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Mirian Defensor-Santiago and Gregorio Honasan, former Press Secretary Ricardo Puno, former Agrarian Reform Secretary Horacio Morales, Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn and Boots Anson-Roa.

Barometer

A women's group denounced Ejercito's candidacy as an attempt to regain political power.

Liza Masa, secretary general of Gabriela, challenged Ejercito to "come clean" by cooperating with the prosecutors who will try Estrada for plunder.

At the University of the Philippines' political science department, Ejercito's Senate run was viewed as a "barometer of the level of political maturity achieved by Filipinos after People Power II."

Prof. Amado Mendoza, a panelist in the forum, said "Loi Ejercito might still be able to win since there is still a portion of our electorate who is not yet capable of making rational judgment on candidates."

The image generated by the tri-media about the Estradas' claimed pro-poor governance "cannot just disappear overnight" for some segments of our electorate, he said.

But another panelist, Dr. Natalia Morales, said Ms Ejercito faces defeat if the on-going criminal investigation on Estrada's alleged ill-gotten wealth "would show that she is as guilty as her husband."

Angara meeting

Osmeña said Ejercito's name was broached during the meeting Angara held with the opposition senators at the Hyatt Regency Hotel last Thursday.

Other senators on the whole welcomed the plans of Ejercito. But there were also those who warned her to seriously think it over for she could be "damaged" by her husband's reputation.

Ejercito's run for the Senate has been likened by her supporters to Hillary Rodham Clinton, who made history last November for being the first wife of a sitting US president to win a seat in the US Senate.

Like Clinton, Ejercito also stood by her husband in the face of scandals.

"She has been a saving grace for the President. She's been perceived almost really like a martyr who has stood by her man through thick and thin. My reading is that in Filipino culture that is appreciated," Sen. Juan Flavier said.

Sen. Loren Legarda-Leviste said Ejercito's plan came as "a welcome surprise; more women in politics regardless of political affiliation is always welcome," she said. "I think she has a very good public image as a sacrificial wife."

Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta, one of the allies of Estrada, said Ejercito was a "fine lady" who was very popular with Filipinos.

"She has done a lot of these medical missions," Aquino-Oreta said.

A psychiatrist by profession, Ejercito immersed herself in charity work during her husband's tenure. She started Serbisyong Pagamutan para sa Mahirap (Medical Service for the Poor), Tubig Pangkalusugan at Kabuhayan (Water for Health and Livelihood), Batang Lansangan Program Street Children Program) and the Botika ng Bayan.

Sen. Robert Jaworski said being a martyr was a "virtue, a plus factor" for her.

"I've heard her talk and give speeches, she talks a lot of sense and I think she could be a contender," Jaworski said.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said Ejercito on the opposition Senate ticket could mean the PMP was running out of candidates.

"But if that should be the case, Loi Ejercito Estrada is a good choice," Pimentel said. "She is fully qualified for any position she might wish to run for."

Pimentel said that aside from being a doctor and a social worker, Ms Ejercito was an "asset to her husband."

"People have a way of distinguishing between those who are primarily responsible (for wrongdoing) and those who may be peripherally responsible for anything," Pimentel said.

No comment

Senate Majority Leader Francisco Tatad chose not to comment on the report.

"I believe I should shut my mouth. People are angry when I talk about political issues," said Tatad, one of those present at the Hyatt meeting.

Sen. Renato Cayetano said that while Ms Ejercito is a "very decent woman," she may suffer if she runs for public office.

"She's not Hillary by all means. Hillary is a very accomplished woman. She had planned her running for the Senate way, way ahead of time," Cayetano said.

"Number two, her husband, although he had problems with the women, nevertheless was not thrown out of the White House," Cayetano added.

As for Ejercito, Cayetano said: "She is not the object of the people's anger because she is a very decent woman but running under her husband's party may do damage to her . . . I think she has to think over this matter because it may only aggravate the situation."

Suspicions in the House

Over at the House of Representatives, there are suspicions that the fielding of Ejercito may be her husband's ploy to regain political influence.

There are those who believe Ejercito, who maintained a low profile during her husband's tenure, may be an unwilling pawn to his comeback plans.

Speaker Feliciano Belmonte, head of the 11-man prosecution in Estrada impeachment trial, said the former president could be banking on Ejercito's continued popularity "as the beleaguered and sacrificing wife."

"She appears to have the best reputation among the members of the family, especially since she had various civic projects that benefited the poor. Erap (Estrada's nickname) probably looks at (the plan for her to run for senator) as a litmus test for his own standing in politics," Belmonte said.

"The Estradas are following the way of the Marcoses," noted Abanse! Pinay Rep. Patricia Sarenas.

"The way to return to politics is through the women which is bad," she added.

Negros Occidental Rep. Apolinario Lozada warned the Ejercitos that the political wounds caused by Edsa II and the aborted impeachment trial "are still very fresh."

"I'm not saying the former first lady is not qualified but she may have a difficult time convincing people to vote for her even if she was not really involved in the criminal cases lodged against her husband," Lozada said.

To clear name

Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. and Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri warned that if Ejercito wins, Estrada might use her position to clear himself from criminal cases that would be filed against him.

Albay Rep. Krisel Luistro and Taguig-Pateros Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano agreed that running for office remains Ejercito's right. "That's the beauty of democracy," Cayetano said. ***With reports from Volt Contreras, Alcuin Papa and Carlito Pablo***

Macapagal warns foes: 'I shall crush you'

(From page A1)

criminal investigation.

"As for the suggestions that my predecessor should go into exile, I have said that it is his call," Ms Macapagal said. "But one thing is non-negotiable. Charges will be pursued. We will be fair. We will give the former president his day in court.

"But I will not allow his allies to smear and perhaps destabilize our government."

Not a happy warrior

Animated and gesturing frequently as if she were in a declamation contest, Ms Macapagal spoke directly to her detractors during the televised address at the start of the evening news.

"I said it before and I will say it again, I am not a happy warrior, but if forced, I have a sworn duty to protect and defend the Constitution above everything else. I shall crush you," the President said.

She said she was extending "our hand of peace and reconciliation" to "the destabilizers." She urged them "to be one with us in our collective quest for a better quality of life for the Filipino."

But she added: "Should you, however, persist in you evil designs, I say to you: you can try but you will fail. You cannot win against the people. So, I warn you, think twice."

Problems

Ms Macapagal also announced that National Security Adviser Lisandro Abadia had offered his resignation and she had accepted it. ***(See related story on Page A1.)***

The President tried to quash coup rumors at her first news conference Thursday by calling former Southern Command chief Edgardo Espinosa in the middle of it and getting reassurances that the reports were only imagination.

She also made two speeches to the military on Saturday in an effort to woo their support.

She yesterday also referred to the many problems she faces, which range from a huge budget deficit to keeping together her fragmented coalition and how to deal with ongoing communist and Moro insurgencies.

"The problems we face are many and diverse," she said. "We will make a difference and we will prevail."

'Troubling' signs

Earlier yesterday, a University of the Philippines law professor warned that civilian supremacy over the military is being supplanted by the ascendancy of retired generals identified with former President Fidel V. Ramos.

Ruben Carranza, who teaches constitutional law, said the Cabinet appointments of retired generals Eduardo Ermita and Abadia "will signal once again the ascendancy of one group within the military over civilian authority."

"There are troubling indications that this is now happening," said Carranza, who was assistant secretary for policy and strategic planning before quitting last December in protest against then President Estrada.

"The hand of Fidel Ramos is (visible) in many of the appointments to sensitive positions in the Macapagal Cabinet," Carranza added bluntly.

Abadia and acting Defense Secretary Ermita were Ramos' former subordinates in the military. Their appointments placed them in control of the government's security apparatus.

Outside the security services, Carranza also pointed to the appointment of Ramos protégé Renato de Villa, another retired general, as Ms Macapagal's executive secretary.

One group

"A review of the major as well as minor appointments will show that the benefits from the civilian uprising at Edsa which the military had no choice except to support are being reaped by only one group within the military," Carranza said.

Carranza said the appointment of civilians as defense secretary and national security adviser would "certainly assure the Filipino people that President Macapagal is serious in representing the interests of those who brought her to power—the millions of ordinary, civilian Filipinos who gathered at Edsa."

He added: "The Filipino soldier's role in People Power II may have been crucial, but it was not and could not have been more decisive than the presence of the people themselves."

Crossroads

Carranza explained the importance of designating a civilian defense secretary because "he or she sits on top the military's chain-of-command, next only to the President."

"We are now at the very important crossroads in our national defense and security policy-making," said Carranza, pointing to the communist and Moro insurgencies, the modernization of the Armed Forces, and the redefinition of the country's defense arrangements with the United States and other countries.

"A military perspective on these issues may be important; but a predominantly military perspective will be detrimental to our long-term national interest," Carranza said.

"There are enough civilians with expertise in political, economic and defense issues who can be national security adviser," he added.

The national security adviser counsels the President on a wide range of domestic and international security concerns.

Under Ramos, the post was held by retired general Jose Almonte, while under Estrada, it went to Alexander Aguirre, another retired general.

More officers

Two other retired generals, both from the Air Force, are the leading aspirants for the top post of the Air Transportation Office.

William Hotchkiss and Rodolfo Estrellado, former commanding general of the Philippine Air Force and former superintendent of the Philippine Military Academy, respectively, lead the contenders for the post of the ATO chief, aviation sources said.

Hotchkiss was the head of the team created by Malacañang to investigate the crash of Air Philippines' Flight 541 on Samal Island, Davao, on April 19, 2000 that killed all 138 passengers and crew. The team has yet to release its findings.

"They have been eyeing the post for a long time even before the crash happened. They remain interested in it. And obviously, they are the top aspirants," sources at the ATO said.

The other aspirants are Captains Panfilo Villaruel, a one-time ATO chief, and Fredelito Juane.

Captain Juane created a stir at the ATO office when he showed up there Friday, claiming that he had been appointed to the post by the group of former Tarlac Rep. Jose "Peping" Cojuangco.

But he was rebuffed when he could not show any appointment papers from Malacañang and after Cojuangco called the ATO to deny Juane's claim. ***Reports from AP, Carlito Pablo, TJ Burgonio and Christine Avendaño***

Gov't to sell 'Ang Pangulo'

(From page A1)

Arroyo said in a statement issued yesterday.

"The other day, we announced the auction of luxury cars, but we will need more. So I told them (business leaders) I am willing to sell all the presidential luxury assets if it is possible," she added.

Ms Macapagal said these assets included, apart from the yacht, various presidential residences and rest houses all over the country, except the Mansion House in Baguio City.

"I learned there are presidential houses in Puerto Azul (in Cavite), San Fabian (in Pangasinan) and other places. There are even houses around Malacañang (which can be sold)," a Malacañang press release quoted Ms Macapagal as saying.

She was referring to structures developed as presidential vacation houses during the Marcos regime, including the so-called "Antique Houses" on J.P. Laurel Street fronting Malacañang.

"The President expressed confidence that the sale of these valuable pieces of real estate would contribute significantly to the government's coffers," the press release said.

It quoted her as saying: "Aside from getting revenues, selling these properties will give a very clear signal to the Filipino people that this administration means business and is willing to sacrifice."

P200 billion

Malacañang estimated around P70 billion in accounts payable left by the administration of deposed President Joseph Estrada. Combined with the P130-billion budget deficit, the total deficit reaches P200 billion.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said the President had ordered an inventory of all the luxury vehicles "inherited" by the new Cabinet members from their predecessors.

She said these vehicles would eventually be "sold off" as part of the new administration's measures to plug the huge budget deficit.

Boncodin said that instead of borrowing from international and domestic sources to address the deficit, the administration would focus on "internally generated revenue sources."

"You know, we should look at properties especially related to the Office of the President and the Cabinet that can be sold," Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo told reporters in Malacañang.

He said the President "mentioned, for instance, the yacht, Ang Pangulo—she is willing to have that sold."

According to Romulo, the deadline for the completion of the inventory is Feb. 13.

"This is important for the reduction of the fiscal debt," he said.

$3 million

The Philippine government acquired the 2,700-ton Ang Pangulo in 1959 at a cost of $3 million.

The yacht, first used by President Carlos P. Garcia, measures 246.75 feet from stem to stern and cruises at 17 knots.

It could hold 400 people when it was new. It was first put up for sale at $5.5 million in 1986, but there were no takers. At that time, it was costing the government P400,000 a month to maintain.

When the late Diosdado Macapagal, the incumbent's father, ran for president on the theme of "simple living" in 1961, he promised that if elected he would not sail aboard the Ang Pangulo.

He kept his promise, and did not use the yacht in his trips to the South.

In August 1998, two months after assuming the presidency, Estrada said he planned to accept donations to raise the P100 million needed to refurbish the yacht.

Estrada used the Ang Pangulo in his visits to Mindanao, making it his virtual office and home—the Malacañang of the South.

But Romulo pointed out that Estrada used the yacht for other than official purposes, referring to the supposed gambling and other activities conducted on board.

Serious

Boncodin said that the fiscal problem was serious, and that the government had conceived of three ways to address this: intensified revenue collection, sale of assets, and an austerity program for all government offices.

"This is not a government that wants to borrow. This is a government that wants to finance all its expenditures through internally generated revenue sources as much as possible," Boncodin said.

"We'll try our best to do that before we go into an international or even a domestic borrowing spree," she said.

Boncodin also said the government would be "really looking at expenditure cuts ranging from P50 billion to P60 billion."

She said a technical team was studying the expenditure items that needed to be "pruned."

The government, she said, would also "streamline" the bureaucracy—not in terms of reducing the number of employees but in putting them in positions where they would be most useful.

Romulo said what was "very important" was the "modest life" that all those in the government were required by law to lead.

"If we are going to regain the confidence and trust of our people, then we must show it from the top. This is leadership by example," he said.

Romulo said the government would soon define a luxury vehicle, and make sure that no Cabinet official would use one.

"There will be no exceptions," he said.

Romulo also told reporters that Interior Secretary Jose Lina had reported a Navigator among the luxury vehicles being inventoried.

He said an official of the Estrada Cabinet had a fleet of luxury vehicles.

Breeding season is on

WHAT CAN I SAY

Bebo Quiros

THE BREEDING season officially begins on the first of February all throughout the northern hemisphere. We're talking about the US of A, Canada, Europe, Japan, even Turkey and Korea. It wasn't too long ago when we struggled to convince the Philracom to shift their Triple Crown Series to the second quarter of the year. When the Philracom did so, local breeders were forced to shift to northern hemisphere breeding.

It took more than ten years of lobbying to convince the Philracom to create a level playing field for local breeders. The "Fair and Square" case definitely was the biggest black eye. Fair and Square was a southern hemisphere Australian-bred whose fourth physiological birthday did not happen till a few days after the first leg of the Triple Crown, then held in September. By rules that governed the series in 1981,he was still a three-year-old Pinoy. However, as a southern hemisphere-bred, Fair and Square was technically a four-year-old on the first of August of that year. As much as we've admired Fair and Square, we have always maintained that he wasn't a real Triple Crown champ. Just as in the impeachment trial, he raced victorious on account of technicalities, legal, judicial and ministerial, as were obtaining on the day, much to the chagrin of local breeders who had to suffer the swagger of the horse importers. However, much has changed. That was long ago.

Pedigree

Most local breeders do not really pay attention to pedigree. Most have never bothered to write out in long hand a six-generation family tree. We used to spend tedious hours during our early days as a breeder when computers and spreadsheets were but buzzwords used by geeks and space cowboys. In today's world of the Internet and software for pedigree programs of all kinds, it is only the mentally lazy backyard breeder of the Jurassic Park-type that continues to breed those hopeless animals that we see week-in, week-out at the two local tracks. We've always maintained that breeding a Secretariat to a goat gets one nothing more than a fast goat.

Most local breeders are not only mentally lazy. They are also the best examples of that old Spanish saying "economia falsa" or false economy. They spend hundreds of thousand of pesos buying the culls of other breeders who had previously paid similar sums only to learn that they also had bought somebody else's culls. Only this time, marketing genius allowed for the sale of the junk further down the pipeline. As P. T. Barnum said, "There's a sucker born every minute".

The cheapest thing in the bloodstock business is advice. For most part, newcomers, even older players, know whom to approach. Water does rise to its own level. The most expensive, as well as heartbreaking, experience in breeding to race or sell, is to start out with the wrong advice. Of the breeding farms that my family competed against in the early 70's, not many are left to carry on. Those that do have found their interests waning, frustrated perhaps by the continued guerilla warfare conducted by different sectors and interest groups. The newcomers come and go, their egos gratified by other pursuits, never really being in the game for the long term.

P.7-M GOLFEST

Casas, Pactolerin head MRT-Southwoods field

CASSIUS Casas and Robert Pactolerin rekindle their old rivalry as the country's top professionals return to action in the MRT-Southwoods open golf championship starting tomorrow, Feb. 1, at the Masters course of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club.

Casas decided at the last minute to skip the Thai Masters and play the Southwoods tourney instead.

There were already 45 names in the entry roster as of Monday, leaving just 15 to be filled up as organizers of the P700,000 event presented by College Assurance Plan decided to open registration on a first-come, first-served basis.

Most of the top local pros are already accounted for including Pactolerin—who won one of only four pro events staged last year—and other battle-tested campaigners like Mars Pucay, Antonio Lascuna, Richard Sinfuego, Cesar Ababa, Ramon Brobio and Carito Villaroma.

Businessman Bob Sobrepeña, chair of the Fil-Estate Group of Companies who has taken the lead in injecting back life into the local pro scene, said it's going to be different this year.

"We will tap all the resources we can to provide the pros with at least a dozen tournaments this year. They now have every reason to get serious with their games again," said Sobrepeña.

The Southwoods tourney is actually the first of four to be hosted by Fil-Estate courses in the next two months. The remaining stops are to be backed by other companies which have already pledged their support.

The MRT-Southwoods Open will also feature a two-day pro-am, the amateur field composed of celebrities and diplomatic dignitaries to lead more color to the kickoff leg of the local professional circuit.

Each leg of the new pro circuit sanctioned by the Asian PGA tour will be a three-in-one affair with the regular men's competition where P500,000 is on offer, the 36 hole CAP Senior Challenge carrying a pot of P100,000 and the pro-am side-event.

The new tour will be handled by APGA-related professional managers led by tournament director Buddy Resurreccion who will be working side by side with Fil-Estate's own portent workforce.

World Cup veterans Mario Siodina and Caloy Nival are the favored players in the seniors competition.

CASAS

PACTOLERIN

Laguna offers to host Intercollegiate meet

LAGUNA province saved this year's National Inter-Collegiate Basketball Championships from cancellation by offering to host the event after Baguio City begged off.

The annual tournament featuring the country's top varsity and high school teams will be held Feb. 18-24 at the San Luis Sports Complex in Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

Basketball Association of the Philippines Region IV director Johnny Tam made the offer after lawyer Edgar Avila informed the BAP that his region couldn't host the tournament due to funding problems.

Laguna, through then governor and now Local Government Secretary Joey Lina, also hosted the event last year with St. Francis of Assisi topping the collegiate level and Iloilo Chinese Commercial High School ruling the secondary division.

Aside from the secretary, FedEx chair Bert Lina, other provincial officials and local government units are expected to support the tournament.

BAP president Tiny Literal said UAAP champion La Salle, NCAA titlist St. Benilde and St. Francis have been seeded into the finals.

Meanwhile, the Philippine men's team tries its mettle against the Negros Slashers and the Cebu Gems in tune-up games in Cebu City next month.

Slated Feb. 24-26, the games will be part of the team's preparation for the Southeast Asia Basketball Association men's championship scheduled in Manila from March 9-15.

"We welcome this opportunity to play these tune-up games against strong teams like Cebu and Negros," said RP team head coach Boyzie Zamar. *Roy Luarca*

Mango Tee on tomorrow at Alabang

THE "TEE fever" in the local golfing scene intensifies as the Alabang Country Club Inc. stages its own member-guest invitational, the Mango Tee, starting tomorrow, Feb. 1.

The first half of the 260-team field will answer the 6 a.m. and 12 noon shotgun tee-offs, signalling the start of the 17th edition of the Mango Tee—a four-day event ending on Sunday.

Simple opening ceremonials and cocktails formally ushered in the tourney yesterday. Making the ceremonial drives were ACCI officials Vic Guzman (president), Joey Laurel (chairman) and Cierry Handog (vice president and golf committee chair) together with Paul Ching of the sponsoring Mitsubishi Motors and Anastacio "Boy" Martirez of Smart Communications.

"We're really glad that participation is as hot as ever and we're looking forward to a fun-filled week," said Guzman.

Mitsubishi Motors is giving away a Lancer GLS 1.6 and Lancer GSR automatic for aces on Holes 8 and 15, respectively. The club will also award P150,000 to an acemaker on No. 6 and 2.

The hole sponsors are Benlife PNB, Immuvit, The Pearl Manila Hotel, UCPB, Citra, Pagcor, Prudentialife Group, AutoMagic, Mori-Mori Restaurant, Golforce, Standard Chartered Bank, Gainers Marketing, Fedex, Speedpack, Sharexchange, YKK, Arizona Ice tea, DPCI, Haji Andi Abusalla, SecurityBank/Diners Club, Design Packaging, Guthrie Jensen, San Miguel Corp., Pacsports, PAL, Manila Standard, GG&A, Maisog, Supreme Construction, Nestle Omega+, Kraft Foods, Ionized by Allmasters, Retail Specialists, Mandarin Oriental, Canelle Food Corp., Skyline, Country club Shares, Miss Saigon, Phil. Wine Merchants, Mixconstrukt, Joseph Rice Mill and Outback.

Some of the notable teamups include Mayor Joey Marquez-Anjo Yllana and Iggy Clavecilla-Francis Gaston.

Jogging boxer dies

By Odon S. Bandiola
PDI Visayas Bureau

KALIBO, Aklan–A 16-year-old amateur boxer died last Jan. 26 while jogging on his way back to his living quarters in front of the Kalibo police station.

Apollo Igusquiza was with other athletes of the province jogging at the major thoroughfares of Kalibo Friday morning when he suddenly collapsed

The Kalibo police brought him to the Dr. Rafael S. Tumbokon Memorial Hospital but was declared dead on arrival by attending physicians. He succumbed to cardiac arrest.

Igusquiza was Aklan's best bet in the boxing competitions at the forthcoming Palarong Panrehiyon of Western Visayas set in Bago City, Negros Occidental next month.

He was the youngest of the five siblings who are into boxing. The most prominent was Anthony Igusquiza who is now under the national training pool .

Araneta derby up

INTERESTING matches await the fans during the four-cock finals of the National Cockers Association 7-Cock Derby at the famous Araneta Coliseum tonight.

The third of 15 regular NCA seven-cock derbies, the big guns dominated the three-cock elimination fights early Tuesday morning.

Welcoat, Shark score hard-earned victories

By Dennis U. Eroa

STANDINGS	W	L
Shark	13	2
Welcoat	11	4
Blu	8	7
Montaña	7	8
Hapee	6	9
Ateneo	6	9

**Games tomorrow:
(Makati Coliseum)**

3:30 p.m.—Montaña vs Blu Sun Power
5:30 p.m.—Welcoat vs Shark Energy

FINALISTS Welcoat Paints and Shark Energy Drink warmed up for their title showdown by posting hard-earned wins over their respective foes last night in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Riding high on the fiery plays of Yancy de Ocampo and Ren Ren Ritualo, Welcoat subdued Blu Sun Power,72-64, while Chester Tolomia and Roger Yap sizzled as Shark edged Hapee, 66-63, at the end of the semifinals.

The Energy Drink Kings finished with an impressive 13-2 mark, followed by the Paintmasters with an 11-4 slate.

Welcoat and Shark start their best-of-game championship series tomorrow.

Yap and Tolomia burned the hoops as Shark survived Hapee's rally in the homestretch.

Hapee'setback enabled Montaña to make the best-of-three series for third against Blu.

Scores:

SHARK 66—Yap 19, Tolomia 11, Robinson 6, Malabanan 6, Velez 5, Castro 5, Echavez 5, Ybañez 5,Rodriguez 2, Sotto 2, Gumpenberger 0, Garcia 0, Salvador 0.

HAPEE 63—Mercado 16, Dy 13, Olaguer 8, Saquilayan 8, Norrdell 6, Bantugan 6, Baguio 4, Lopez 2, Espiritu 0, Sison 0.

Quarters:18-14,30-34,50-47,66-63.

WELCOAT 72—De Ocampo 17, Ritualo 11, Villoria 10, Canlas 8, Manalo 5, Cruz 5, Zamora 4, Sison 4, Orfrecio 2, Patrimonio 2, Tan 2, Pamintuan 2.

BLU 64—Marasigan 14, Legaspi 13, Sanz 13, Billones 11, Bacani 7, De la Cuesta 2, Bona 2, David 2, Kalaw 0.

Quarters:15-16,31-29,50-51,72-64.

Barotac booters blast Davao opponents, 6-0

BACOLOD CITY—Powerhouse St. Paul School of Barotac Nuevo (Iloilo) blasted Davao's University of Mindanao, 6-0, but host West Negros College was held to a 1-1 deadlock by Iligan City's La Salle Academy Monday at the start of the 17th Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 national football finals at the Paglaum Sports Complex here.

Kimley Delgado scored three goals (in the 14th, 65th and 90th minutes) to power former national champion St. Paul School to the lopsided triumph.

Stephen Bayona, Meliton Pelayo and Relan Britania produced the other SPS goals in the 56th, 78th and 89th minutes, respectively.

Siegfried Apurado, a Colegio de Santo Tomas-Recoletos of San Carlos City student who reinforced WNC, outwitted his guard to break the ice for the hosts in the seventh minute.

But LSA's Altahil Faisal spoiled the hosts' bid to escape with a hairline triumph by knocking in the equalizer—a short stab in front of the right post—in the 80th minute.

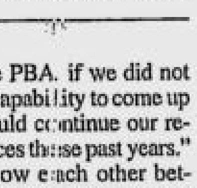
The six-team tourney sponsored by Coca-Cola with Adidas as official ball will be played until Feb. 2.

Jim Harting, president of the Coca-Cola Co. (Philippine Division), exhorted the participating teams to be humble in victory and magnanimous in defeat in his inspirational message during the opening ceremony.

"One never enjoys the sweetness of victory without experiencing the bitterness of defeat," Harting said.

Tough task for Thunder in PBA

CLEAN LIVING



Manolo R. Iñigo

TOUGH it really was.

Bucking overwhelming odds, never-say-die Batang Red Bull overcame a listless start last season and the eventually finished a surprising third in the year-ending PBA Governors Cup.

As a result, the team of the masa now finds itself in a predictable greatness, no longer taken lightly by basketball cognoscenti. And the odds are stacked even more in the Thunder's favor with the keenly awaited comeback of Kerby Raymundo and the addition of No. 1 pick Willie Miller to the formidable lineup.

Still, the Photokina franchise of sportsman-businessman George Chua and coach Yeng Guiao will find the sailing rough in the ongoing All-Filipino Conference because of the quality field and the high level of competition, regarded by many as one of the closest in living memory.

"We'll try not to disappoint the fans," said soft-spoken Chua. "We did not aspire to join the PBA. if we did not believe we have the capability to come up with a team that would continue our remarkable performances these past years."

"The players know each other better now and they jell pretty well," said Yeng Guiao after a practice session where multi-talented Raymundo and flashy Miller teamed up perfectly with their teammates.

Raymundo's initial experience in the PBA soured last year when he was suspended due to a technicality. The year-long layoff has taken its toll on the 6-foot-6 all around player who admitted to only about 80 percent fit to play a few weeks ago. "But I'm fast regaining my form right now,'' stressed Raymundo.

On the other hand, the 5-foot-11 Miller has yet to prove his true worth in the PBA. But Guiao has high expectations, saying the 23-year-old Miller has the making of a future star.

"I'm sure he'll become one of the most dominant point guards in the PBA," said Yeng Guiao. "Miller has proven himself a consistent scorer kahit sang liga mapunta from the NCAA to the PBL to the MBA." Miller was a former Letran standout, who also donned the colors of Tanduay in the Philippine Basketball League and the Nueva Ecija Patriots in the Metropolitan Basketball association.

Miller was plucked from among 57 applicants in the PBA draft last Jan. 14. The son of a Filipino mother and an American father based in Olongapo, Miller was chosen to fill the gap left by the sensational Jimwell Torion, who has undergone surgery for a dislocated shoulder. Miller was selected because he has the requisite gifts—speed, a rippling physique, the ability to dunk and perform fancy plays.

* * *

ENRIQUE LIM REMEMBERED. To perpetuate the memory of the late sportsman-businessman Enrique Jose Gonzales Lim, son of basketball Olympian Eddie Lim and Annie Lim, a tee shed has been built at Hole No. 1 of the fabled Wack Wack east course. The blessing ceremony will be held at 5 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 4, with friends, relatives and family members in attendance. An audio-videophile and golf buff, Enrique died in a car accident last April 9 at age 42. He was vice president for finance at Belson Securities, Inc. at the time of his death. Enrique left behind wife Annette and daughters Elise Noelle Anne, Elaine Anne and Erica Anne.

* * *

For inquiries, call fax/phone (044) 933-1214 or EasyCall 141-267284.

Wolves shade Bucks

MINNEAPOLIS—Kevin Garnett scored 13 of his 29 points in the fourth quarter as the Minnesota Timberwolves rallied for their seventh consecutive win, 99-96 over the Milwaukee Bucks in the NBA on Monday night.

Terrell Brandon added 20 points, including two free throws with 25.4 seconds to play for the game's final points, and he tied his career-high with 16 assists.

Glenn Robinson scored 25 points to lead the Bucks.

Complete results

Boston 99, Detroit 87; Washington 95, Cleveland 89; Phoenix 95, Atlanta 82; Minnesota 99, Milwaukee 96; Utah 97, Denver 91; Vancouver 97, New Jersey 86; Charlotte 93, Golden State 85; San Antonio 96, LA Clippers 67. *AFP*

SPORTS ON TV

By Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Sacramento Kings vs Golden State Warriors at 11:30 a.m. (r- 8 p.m.) on ESPN
US NCAA - Connecticut Huskies vs St. John's Red Storm at 4 p.m. on ESPN
GOLF: PGA Phoenix Open, Day Three at 8 a.m. (r) on Star Sports
PGA Tour Year in Review 2000 at 7:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports
BILLIARDS: 2000 Women's Tournament of Champions, Semifinal #1 at 4 p.m. (r) on ESPN
BOWLING: PBA Silicon Valley Open at 11:30 a.m. (r) on ESPN

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San Juan chess champ

DENNIS San Juan stunned defending champion Jose Ventura Aspiras in the last round to complete a rare six-game sweep in the combined Harmony-Serenity section of the fourth leg of the 2001 Philippine Executive Active Chess Express held recently at Land Bank's canteen in Makati City. The series resumes on Feb. 24. Call 892-8759 for details. Gary Legaspi of Serg's Chocolate finished second with five points. Aspiras and Raymundo Marras of Insular Life were tied for third with 4.5 points each.

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

PSC 'summit' in Davao

PHILIPPINE Sports Commission Chair Carlos Tuason announced yesterday that for the first time in its 11 years of existence, the Commission is holding the 1st Mindanao Sport Summit on Feb. 19-20, 2001 in Davao City. With the theme "Rebuilding Mindanao through sports for Peace Program," the summit expects to gather government officials from the six regions in Mindanao.

DI remains unsigned

GAMES TODAY
(Philsports)
5:15 p.m. – Tanduay vs Purefoods
7:30 p.m. – SMB vs Ginebra

BY MARC ANTHONY REYES

DANNY Ildefonso, last year's jubilant MVP, was as joyless as a kid minus a Christmas gift as he remained unsigned at presstime.

This developed as Tanduay nixed yesterday a request by PBA Commissioner Jun Bernardino to amend Tanduay's offer sheet of P96 million to Ildefonso covering 16 years.

In a statement, Tanduay told Bernardino that "in the interest of the league and the basketball fans, . . . we now declare there is no Offer Sheet outstanding for San Miguel to match."

As a result of Tanduay's move, the 24-year-old Ildefonso lost a fortune, if not a future secured financially as the Tanduay package assured him of utter wealth until he turns 40.

Up to late last night, Ildefonso was virtually under the mercy of San Miguel, which won the favorable decision from Bernardino after it balked at facing Tanduay's offer sheet point blank.

William Ong, Ildefonso's manager, told the INQUIRER that they would now compromise for a one-year contract with San Miguel. But San Miguel was pushing for at least three years.

SMB bench

If Ildefonso remained unsigned with the Beermen before today's 7:30 p.m. game between San Miguel and Barangay Ginebra, he won't even be allowed to sit on the SMB bench.

Already, Ildefonso was humiliated in public on opening day when PBA officials barred him from joining the opening ceremonies on Sunday despite getting the green light from his coach to join the parade.

Tanduay Gold, whose creative offer sheet threw the commissioner's office in disarray, will take on Purefoods in the first match at 5:15 p.m. at Philsports.

Through a letter to Bernardino signed jointly by Heinrich Khoo, Tanduay's assistant governor, and Lucio K. Tan Jr., Tanduay team owner/governor, Tanduay said it recalled its offer sheet to avoid prolonging "debates and arguments that may disrupt the harmony within the PBA family."

Saying that league rules "are vague or general in construction" insofar as the crafting of offer sheets is concerned, Tanduay said: "Unless the rules are made specific, cases such as this (Ildefonso's case) will continue to happen."

Tanduay said the contract offered to Ildefonso could have "given aspiring players something to look forward to and strive for excellence."

Undue restrictions

Said Tanduay: "The offer sheet was made available to all teams as a means of enhancing their competitiveness and to allow players to fully develop their careers and maximize their hard-earned talents. Putting undue restrictions and discouraging 'creative' offers is like arming a person with a gun to defend himself and later prohibiting him from firing the gun as it may kill people. Or, it may be compared to opening a 'Pandora's Box' and then frantically looking around for cures to the diseases that come out of the box."

Asked Tanduay: "If the offer sheet can utlimately destroy the league, then why allow it at all? If 'creative' offer sheets patterned after the NBA do not yet conform to the temperament of the Filipinos (and also to their economy), then why don't we junk it?"

Meanwhile, SMB's outgoing governor Alberto Villa-Abrille denied having dared Ildefonso to entertain offer sheets from other teams.

In a statement, Villa-Abrille said: "We negotiated fairly and professionally...as early as the fourth quarter of last year. We waited in good faith up to the last minute for their (Ong and Ildefonso) counter proposal."

But Ong told the INQUIRER that he was standing pat on their claim that the official dared him to scout for offer sheets, which led them signing that multi-million-peso contract with Tanduay.

FILE PHOTO

ILDEFONSO: "Balikbeerman" for one year only?

BAP row tackled today

BY JUNE NAVARRO

CONTENDING parties in the Basketball Association of the Philippines will have their day in court when the POC Arbitration Committee hears the case today right after the Olympic body's general assembly at the Philippine Columbian Association.

The Arbitration Committee, spearheaded by sailing's Claudio Altura, summoned the renegade faction of Quintellano "Tiny" Literal and basketball chief Freddie Jalasco to appear at 4 p.m.

"We hope the parties involved will cooperate. If they have nothing to hide, they must present their side in the hearing," said POC president Celso Dayrit. "But as far as the POC is concerned, Jalasco is still the BAP president."

In Altura's committee are rowing's Benjie Ramos, body building's Lito Mondragon, football's Rene Adad and judo's Edu Manzano.

Last week, retired Gen. Rene Cruz, chair of the ad hoc fact-finding body, gave up on the BAP's dispute and threw the case to the Arbitration Committee.

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METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

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▩ NBI to open hotline for women and kids A28
▩ 'Basura busters' keep Navotas streets clean A28

Abalos to probe 'anomalous' MMDA deals

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. yesterday said he would order the investigation of reportedly anomalous MMDA policies and contracts involving the agency.

Abalos said he learned that the previous administration did not act upon a number of recommendations to resolve the garbage problem.

He said that if the investigators turned up with something, he would not hesitate to prosecute those responsible for graft.

He said he could not understand why the MMDA ignored the suggestions, adding that a number of the recommendations appeared to be sensible.

He said one recommendation that was not acted upon was the segregation and composting scheme.

Abalos said the former MMDA officials failed to aggressively push for the implementation of the segregation and composting recommendation and merely relied on sanitary landfills.

The new MMDA chief said sanitary landfills are no longer socially acceptable after San Mateo, Carmona and Semirara residents strongly opposed the construction and operation of dumpsites in their areas.

Aside from sanitary landfills being unpopular, the awarding of rights to build and operate landfills is also usually accompanied by controversy, costing the government a lot of money, Abalos said.

A garbage contractor from northern Metro Manila told the INQUIRER that the garbage crisis was aggravated by an unofficial MMDA order dated Jan. 13 which directed all contractors to temporarily cease operations.

The contractor said the order was meant to force deposed President Estrada to order the reopening of the San Mateo Sanitary Landfill (SMSL) through an executive order.

"To a certain degree, the (former MMDA officials) succeeded because Estrada issued an order directing the Rizal provincial government to reopen the SMSL," the contractor said.

Abalos said this report was among many to be investigated. *Nelson F. Flores*

ABALOS

Body of Payatas victim dug up

BY PHILIP C. TUBEZA

RESCUERS yesterday found the body of the 16-year-old scavenger believed to have been buried in the Payatas trash slide on Friday.

The body of Rogee Baliwas, of Kasiglahan Village in Erap City, Rodriguez, Rizal was found buried under tons of trash at the Boreas Area, Barangay Payatas, Quezon City, after five days of diggings, said retired general Arnulfo Bañez, of Quezon City's department of public order and security.

Rescuers found the body about 2:05 p.m. near the creek where Baliwas was supposed to have jumped into to avoid the trash slide.

But Baliwas apparently failed to avoid the trash avalanche, said Bañez.

He said the decay of the body of Baliwas was faster because of methane gas in the dump.

Earlier, authorities said Baliwas might have been alive but did not go home because his parents had forbidden him to scavenge at the Payatas dump.

Baliwas was scavenging below the mountain of trash at the Boreas Area about 8:15 a.m. when the trash slide happened. Tons of trash fell after a bulldozer was trying to flatten the top of the mountain.

Baliwas' father Roger, 57, was on top of the mountain when the trash slide happened.

"The local government will shoulder the boy's funeral expenses. And like the other Payatas victims, his family will also get some financial support," Bañez said.

He said city hall is increasing the number of security guards in the area to prevent scavengers from going into dangerous areas.

"At the moment we only have five former soldiers guarding the entire dump. But because they are unarmed, the scavengers continue on going through garbage in dangerous places. The scavengers even throw stones at the guards," Bañez said.

He said that Erap City residents scavenge in Payatas because there are no jobs in Rodriguez. The scavengers even take their children to scavenge because a child could earn P100 a day, Bañez said.

Despite Baliwas' death, Bañez said Quezon City would not close the dumpsite for fear of a metro-wide epidemic.

"It is better to have these isolated accidents than have an epidemic in Metro Manila, where more people could get hurt," Bañez said.

He admitted that other cities and municipalities in the metropolis are also dumping their trash in Payatas.

Macapagal supporter stabs Erap loyalist over Edsa 2

A SUPPORTER of President Macapagal on Monday stabbed an admirer of deposed President Estrada where it hurt the most—in the groin.

Romeo Santillano, married, of Riverside Street, Pasay City, was badly cut up when he was taken to the Pasay City General Hospital, police said.

SPO1 Cris Gabutin said the unidentified suspect managed to escape after the incident.

The two men were having a drink early Monday morning in Pasay City when they started arguing about the merits of the deposed president and Ms Macapagal.

Santillano, the unidentified man and their neighbors were having a drink at the Riverside area about 1:30 a.m. when they started discussing People Power II, the four days of protests that led to a change in government, police said.

As the night wore on, the discussion became more heated until a full-blown argument erupted among the drinkers.

Suddenly, the unidentified man pulled out a knife and stabbed Santillano in the groin.

Police are now hunting the unidentified attacker. *Alcuin Papa*

Wazzzzup?

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Vicencio accused of waging hate drive

By Christian V. Esguerra

MALABON Mayor Amado Vicencio has allegedly launched a hate campaign against members of the municipal council who exposed the alleged irregularities in the construction of the P122-million town hall, an opposition councilor said.

Councilor Payapa Ona, recently ousted from the Malabon council's Prequalification, Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC), yesterday claimed Vicencio's men have been trying to convince local leaders not to support the candidacy of Ona herself and of Councilors Edilberto Torres and Chiqui Roque.

"The mayor is behind the hate campaign," Ona told the *Inquirer*." "It's too bad to have a mayor like this. He's taking the issue too personally.

"He should just stick to the issue," she added.

Vicencio and his public information officer, Abby Balatbat, were unavailable for comment.

Ona said Vicencio is trying to get back at those who revealed the alleged anomalies in the construction of the new town hall.

Torres and Roque filed graft charges against Vicencio before the Office of the Ombudsman.

Ona, when she was still a member of PBAC, also tried to expose the alleged attempts by the mayor's men to cover up the irregularities in the construction contract.

"I have received reports that the municipal hall's telephone operator, Cynthia Crisostomo, called up local leaders, asking them not to support our candidacy," Ona claimed.

She said Vicencio's men tried to reach officials of different non-government organizations to make a similar appeal.

Tricycle man shot dead

TRICYCLE operator Ivan Occena yesterday went out of his house in Payatas, Quezon City to buy food for his one-year-and-two-month-old daughter at a nearby neighborhood store.

But Occena, 34, did not make it to the store. An unidentified man with a shotgun shot him.

Worse, Occena's daughter was also wounded in the broad-daylight attack.

Police are still in the dark about the killing of Occena, of Everlasting Street, Lower Jasmine, Payatas, Quezon City. He had no known enemies in his neighborhood, said investigator SPO1 Efren Sobrepeña.

The killing happened after Occena went out of his house, carrying his baby in his arms, at about 9:30 a.m. yesterday, he added.

"Occena had just walked about two houses away from his home when the unidentified suspect approached him" and shot him at close range," Sobrepeña said. *Philip C. Tubeza*

Don't use Edsa, 'Baby' tells Malonzo

By Christian V. Esguerra

CALOOCAN Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio yesterday accused Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo of grabbing credit for the Edsa People Power II event to shore up his bid for a third straight term in the May elections.

Asistio, who will also run for mayor, claimed that since then Malonzo has proclaimed himself "the hero of Edsa."

"Don't use the Edsa issue to boost your campaign," Asistio told Malonzo. "And please stop politicking."

The INQUIRER tried to reach Malonzo but was told he had a meeting in Malacañang.

But his chief of staff, William Villegas, downplayed Asistio's claim.

"Nobody's grabbing credit for Edsa," Villegas said. "The mayor was just helping the country in his own little way."

Asistio, a close friend of deposed President Estrada, alleged that Malonzo is now bragging about his "strong connections" with Malacañang during speaking engagements.

Asistio also said the mayor is set to release campaign posters bannering Malonzo as "Bayani ng Edsa (Hero of Edsa)."

If that happens, the lawmaker said he would come out with this campaign: "Asistio: *Tapat na kaibigan, may paninindigan; kayo na ang bahala* (Asistio: A true friend with conviction. You decide)."

Villegas described how Malonzo supporters spoofed Asistio's campaign slogan "Go, go, Baby, go!" and turned it into "Go, go, Baby! Gone!"

Villegas said Malonzo is now "optimistic" all his projects would be implemented "because there would no longer be any glitches at the Palace."

Malonzo, President Macapagal's partymate in Lakas, was among the fiercest critics of Estrada.

Stung by the scathing remarks, the deposed President suspended Malonzo and his allies in the city council for allegedly realigning local government funds.

Councilor Luis "Tito" Varela has come to Malonzo's defense, hitting those who have been critical of the local chief executive's handling of Caloocan's garbage problems.

Valera, a former basketball player and referee in the Philippine Basketball Association, slammed opposition Councilor Henry Cammayo for claiming that Malonzo could not order barangay chairs to allocate funds for "garbage matters."

In a statement, Varela cited the Local Government Code where "it is explicitly stated that barangay chairs are in charge of services pertaining to cleanliness, particularly solid waste collection."

Cammayo, who will likely run against Varela, criticized Malonzo earlier for passing the blame for the city's garbage problem to barangay officials and local opposition members.

ASISTIO

MALONZO

The Local Government Code requires that "the basic function and facilities (for collecting city garbage) shall be funded from the share of local government units in the proceeds of national taxes and other local revenues and funding support from the national government," Varela pointed out.

"The collection of garbage is one of the devolved functions of the barangay. Therefore, based on the above quoted provisions, their share in the national taxes should be utilized first to finance the devolved functions such as collection and segregation of garbage.

"This requirement is mandatory."

Malonzo threatened to file administrative charges against barangay officials for allegedly failing to collect garbage in their areas.

Cammayo said Malonzo should be the one to blame since he is "the father of the city."

To Mr. Arroyo's cousin: The scores, please

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

SHE was, as usual, doll-pretty. But that was not a very flattering front-page picture they printed of the President on the golf course. She appeared dwarfish.

The golf club, an awesome, long-stemmed driver, leaned on her shoulder like a mighty flagpole and only succeeded in making Gloria Macapagal- Arroyo look smaller than she is.

The caption said she displayed her golfing form at the Tagaytay Highlands course.

What form, it was never stated. There was no story, or honest account of the President's game.

There was not a single detail of how she fared on and around the greens.

We have no right to complain, though.

Erap Estrada, hope he's enjoying the hangover, did not seem to mind that his very expensive and damaging game with his mistresses was made public.

You see, it's said that Ms Macapagal enjoys games. But no matter how silly some whispers behind her sound, the new President, always looking and sounding discreet, is entitled to keep very secret the scores of whatever she plays.

* * *

One story waiting to be written is, of course, how Ms Macapagal would effect the reshuffle of vital sports agencies directly under the Office of the President.

They may look insignificant now, but the appointments she would make for these various agencies will either prove or dispel charges that the President has been playing games with assorted hustlers.

There's a suspenseful guessing game on who would be replaced and who would be retained.

And who would take the first shot at retention but the very visible head of the Philippine Sports Commission, Carlos "Butch" Tuason.

The decent thing to do, after a change in leadership, is for heads of agencies to tender a courtesy resignation.

Tuason, an avowed Estrada running boy, has, however, beaten everybody off the blocks with his do-or-die bid to retain his highly lucrative post.

* * *

For example, Tuason, offering to read the President's mind, surmised that Ms Macapagal would take into serious consideration his performance when she finally decides on whether or not to retain him as PSC chief.

"If ever I get to keep my job here in the PSC, it's not because of my relationship with the President's husband," Tuason told Abac Cordero of the Philippine Star.

Tuason, in case you don't know, is a cousin of Juan Miguel Arroyo, the President's husband.

After the President set her first rule, Butch Tuason can't be blamed for making an advertisement of himself.

Yes, as a first act, the President said that she would not honor or entertain deals with any relative of hers or that of Mr. Arroyo's.

But Tuason was quick to claim that this rule does not, in any way, encompass him. All for the simple fact that he was there ahead, meaning he was already PSC chair courtesy of Boss Erap, before President Macapagal-Arroyo could assume office.

That, you bet, is sound mathematics. It also sent the message hard and straight: Our man at the PSC is begging to be retained.

* * *

PSC chair Butch Tuason is banking on his achievements.

Unfortunately, the guy has forgotten to state what he has done for Philippine sports in the over two years that he has been at the helm.

I dug and looked back a bit and what I saw instead was the dismal performance of the Philippine delegation in the 1998 Bangkok Asiad. RP salvaged a lone gold medal, in billiards.

There also was a similarly phony finish in the 1999 Brunei Southeast Asian Games.

Next came the mother of all sporting disasters in the Sydney Olympics where the Philippines failed to salvage a single medal for the first time in 16 years.

This one can't form part of the official tally. So we won't detail the achievements of the fabulous PSC Dream Team that made waves in the Sydney Game-watching event.

Of course, Tuason & Co. scored big doing legal calisthenics and were cleared of the serious funds misuse charges raised by Tisha Abundo, who had resigned as PSC commissioner in disgust.

* * *

Well, if Butch Tuason is listening, may I beg my friend to fill in the blanks and state what he has achieved as PSC boss under Boss Erap.

Pardon my saying this, but after a review, I could only conclude that Philippine sports did not only stagnate, it actually retrogressed in the previous administration.

Anyway, I also called up an astute, very reliable spectator who has been keeping watch over Philippine sports. He did not mince words in denouncing the decay.

"Achievements?" retorted Ding Marcelo, sports editor of Manila Bulletin. "If achievements would be the gauge, all these officials should have resigned a long time ago."

But please don't give up on Butch Tuason yet.

OK. The guy has no clear, subpar card to submit.

But he could still make it if Madame Cousin-in-Law also rules that keeping scores a secret is the name of the game.

Four men arrested for selling hot car

POLICE arrested four suspected car thieves for selling a stolen car in Ermita, Manila early Monday night.

Rogelio Gacusan, 21; Glen Torres, 28; Marlon Livelo, 29; and Reynaldo Chaves, 29, all residents of Sampaloc, Manila, allegedly tried to sell a blue Honda model 1994, to undercover policemen for P20,000.

Acting on an informant's tip, members of the Western Police District Station 5 conducted the bust at about 7 p.m. at the Harbor View parking area on T.M. Kalaw Street in Ermita.

One of the policemen, SPO1 Fred Ramos, was able to negotiate with the suspects through a confidential agent. He said the suspects agreed to his offer of P20,000 but would show him the car only if the money was ready.

SPO1 Ramos met the suspects, who were on board the Honda, at about 6 p.m. Other policemen pounced on the four suspects as soon as SPO1 Ramos handed Torres an envelope containing a wad of fake money intended as payment for the stolen car.

Supt. Miguel Laurel, Station 5 commander, said the car belonged by one Ethel Ramos, a resident of Pink Rose Street, Doña Manuela Subdivision, Pamplona, Las Piñas City.

It was stolen while parked in front of the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City on the night of Jan. 21. *Jerome Aning*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, January 31, 2001
4th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **Heb 12:4-7, 11-15**
Gospel: **Mk 6:1-6**

Jesus returned to his own country, and his disciples followed him. When the sabbath came, he began teaching in the synagogue, and most of those who heard him were astonished. They commented, "How did this come to him? What kind of wisdom has been given to him that he also performs such miracles? Who is he but the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joset and Judas and Simon? His sisters, too, are they not here among us?" So they took offense at him.

And Jesus said to them, "Prophets are despised only in their own country, among their relatives and in their own family." And he could work no miracles there, but only healed a few sick people by laying his hands on them. Jesus himself was astounded at their unbelief.

Commentary:

Even when I got ordained as a priest, I remained as a son to my parents and a younger brother to most of our family siblings. The title appended to my name had no effect at all in their behavior towards me. In fact, when I made the mistake of reminding an elder brother to attend Mass one Sunday, all I got back was: "Hey, just because you're a priest doesn't mean you can behave like a boss around here." It was when I was trying too hard to evangelize my family that I actually failed. But it was when I behaved as the ordinary son and brother that I was to them that I eventually succeeded (without even trying). It must have been very much like that with Jesus. He had to learn the hard way. I think he finally succeeded after all, since his own mother and close relatives eventually became his most avid followers.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

MERCANTILE LAW (BANKING LAW) Joint and solidary signature— It is a common banking practice to require the JSS (joint and solidary signature) of a major stockholder or corporate officer, as an additional security for loans granted to corporations. There are at least two reasons for this. First, in case of default, the creditor's recourse, which is normally limited to the corporate properties under the veil of separate corporate personality, would extend to the personal assets of the surety. Second, such-surety would be compelled to ensure that the loan would be used for the purpose agreed upon, and that it would be paid by the corporation. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Panganiban, Third Division, Security Bank and Trust Company, Inc. v. Cuenca, G.R. No. 138544, October 3, 2000]

Digest by R.B. Vera

Ombudsman probers accused of extortion

By Philip C. Tubeza

TWO investigators from the Office of the Ombudsman allegedly tried to get P10,000 from a Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) officer in exchange for the dropping of graft charges against him.

Police arrested associate Ombudsman investigator Joaquin Bumanlag, 33, of Barangay San Bartolome, Novaliches, Quezon City, while he was receiving marked money from Insp. Virgilio Acabal of BFP-Quezon City, said investigator SPO1 Felix Dolin.

Lawyer Gerald Barres, Bumanlag's superior in the Office of the Ombudsman for Military Affairs in Malacañang, is also being hunted for allegedly telling Bumanlag to accept the bribe, he added.

"Bumanlag allegedly told Acabal through text messages in his cell phone that he had to shell out P10,000 if he wanted the charges against him scrapped," Dolin said.

Right after he got this message, the complainant immediately went to the Quezon City Hall police detachment to report the incident. Dolin said he and his colleagues then planned an entrapment operation against the suspects.

The entrapment was set at around 5 p.m. on Friday in front of the Quezon City Post Office. The policemen pounced on Bumanlag as he was receiving P500 in marked money from Acabal.

The investigators later confiscated from Bumanlag several documents showing that the graft charges against Acabal had been dismissed.

Dolin said charges of robbery-extortion and violation of the Anti-graft and Corrupt Practices Act were filed against Bumanlag and Barres before the Quezon City prosecutor's office. The fiscal handling the case, however, ordered a more thorough investigation of Bumanlag and Barres' alleged activities before the charges could be filed in court, Dolin added.

Militants mark FQS anniversary

By Jerome Aning

ABOUT 100 militant youths yesterday afternoon held a brief rally on the Don Chino Roces (formerly Mendiola) Bridge near Malacañang to mark the anniversary of the First Quarter Storm.

The First Quarter Storm refers to a series of student protests that flared up in 1970 and blazed on until the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos imposed martial law two years later.

The activists, who come from the Sanlakas-Youth and the Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Manggagawang Pilipino, trooped to the foot of the bridge at 1:30 p.m. and lighted 70 candles to remember the student uprising that gripped Manila's so-called "University Belt."

"The social volcano that was seething in 1970 is still rumbling today," said Sanlakas-Youth spokesperson Page Reyes.

She and the other activists chanted slogans decrying the alleged social inequalities and mass poverty plaguing the country.

Reyes said the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo "should be as much concerned with the possible explosion of the social volcano as it is with Mayon Volcano."

"An Edsa 3 people Power is not an unlikely scenario since none of the fundamental problems of society were resolved by Edsa 1 and 2," she added.

The protesters carried placards that read "*Sigaw ng kabataan noon at ngayon: Pagbabagong panlipunan* (The youth's cry then and now: Social change)."

Reyes said "youth activists of the new millennium," especially the students, comprised the bulk of the thousands of people in Edsa 2.

OSG wants P27-B lot returned to public domain

By Jerry Explanada

THE OFFICE of the Solicitor General said a 99.6-hectare prime property in Las Piñas, said to be worth more than P27 billion but which has an illegal title, should be returned to public domain.

The OSG made the call in a memorandum to the Supreme Court as it also expressed confidence in winning the dispute over the prime lot, located near the posh Ayala-Alabang village.

Government lawyers had earlier asked the high tribunal to declare as null and void 1929 land titles supposedly covering the disputed real estate.

They also urged the high court to reverse a September 1999 decision of the court's Third Division, which upheld the validity of the 1929 titles.

The real estate firm Peltan Development Inc. and the Espinosa group are claiming ownership of more than 75 hectares of the property in Baranggay Tindig na Mangga.

Another private company, Firestone Ceramics Inc., claims 3.7 hectares of the disputed property. The high court has consolidated its plea with the state's petition.

The state and Firestone claimed that the land titles of Peltan and the Espinosas were bogus. But the two business groups have denied the accusation.

The government won the first two rounds in its legal battle with Peltan and the Espinosa group after the OSG succeeded in convincing the Supreme Court en banc to take up the case. Then, the high court denied with finality the real estate company's motion for reconsideration of its June 28 decision to take up the state and Firestone's petitions.

Voting in favor of the government and Firestone's pleas were Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and Associate Justices Josue Bellosillo, Reynato Puno, Santiago Kapunan, Vicente Mendoza, Arturo Buena, Consuelo Ynares-Santiago and Sabino de Leon (and then associate justice Fidel Purisima).

The dissenting associate justices were Jose Melo, Jose Vitug, Artemio Panganiban, Leonardo Quisumbing, Bernardo Pardo and Minerva Gonzaga-Reyes.

In the OSG memorandum, Solicitor General Ricardo Galvez emphasized that "under the Regalian doctrine, all lands not otherwise appearing to be clearly within private ownership are presumed to belong to the state."

Galvez also told the Supreme Court that the whole of Las Piñas was originally classified as forest land until 1928 when some 1,200 ha. of the entire 2,556 ha. comprising the town were declared alienable and disposable.

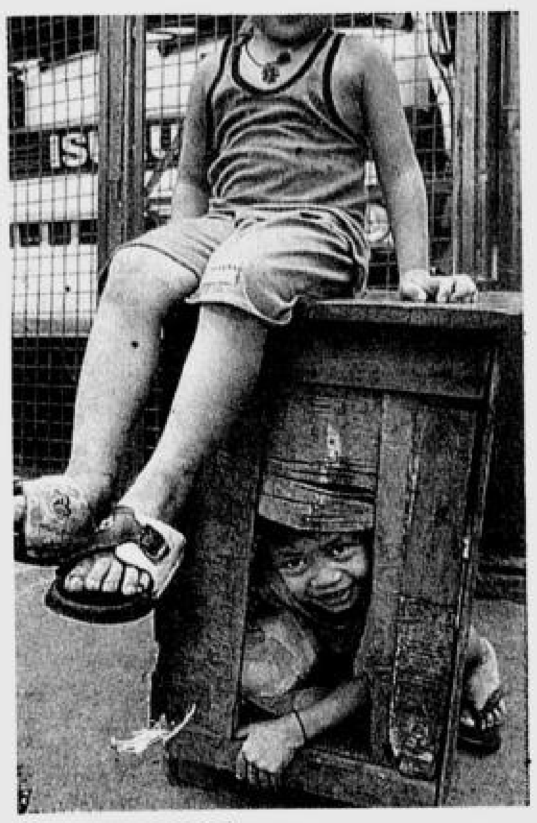
But the disputed piece of real estate was not part of the 1928 declaration, Galvez pointed out.

He also noted that "the application for private ownership of the Las Piñas property is considered null and void for the simple reason that the application was instituted at a time when the property had not yet been declared by government as alienable and disposable."

But Peltan lawyers said "giving cognizance to this forest land argument would mean that hundreds of thousands of original certificates of title covering lands not only in Las Piñas but also in other parts of Metro Manila are also null and void."

They added that "OCT no. 4216, from which the titles of Peltan and other individual owners have been derived, has been affirmed by the (Supreme Court's Third Division) as valid and genuine."

But "since the land covered by OCT 4216 was still part of unclassified forest land in 1927, it follows then that the said land was incapable and private ownership," the OSG said.



CHEAP THRILL

TWO brothers frolic outside their home in Binondo, Manila, with a wooden box as their toy. DENNIS SABANGAN

Boy rescued from drug peddler

By Jerome Aning

A 7-YEAR-OLD boy abducted on Friday by a suspected drug dealer in Caloocan City was turned over to Manila policemen unharmed at the Muslim Center in Quiapo yesterday morning.

The suspect, Alex Benito alias "Tato Muslim," reportedly snatched the boy at about 3:30 p.m. from the boy's house on Binhagan Street, Caloocan City, police said.

The boy's mother told Western Police District Station 3 commander Supt. Danilo Abarsoza that Benito and her husband Rolando were partners in the illegal drug trade. She said Benito accused Rolando of defrauding a big-time Quiapo drug lord named Otio.

The drug lord reportedly sent Benito to punish her husband, the mother told police.

She said Benito went to their house and gained the trust and confidence of the boy by pretending to be his godfather and treating him to a snack.

The mother said she went to Benito's house at 418 Barbosa St., Quiapo later that night but failed to find her son. She said she went again on Sunday and met Mira Londo, 32, who demanded P15,000 in exchange for the boy's release.

The mother was able to give only P7,000, but when Londo refused to let her see the boy, Melissa went to the Barbosa police community precinct and had Londo arrested.

Benito called the Barbosa precinct at 11:30 a.m. yesterday and said he would be setting the boy free, Abarsoza said.

A Quiapo vendor, Asiah Omar Lalo, 46, turned over the boy to police.

Lalo said a stranger left the boy in his care.

The boy and his mother had a teary reunion at the City Hall during a news conference called by Mayor Lito Atienza.

Londo, who was turned over to the Caloocan police Sunday night, would be charged as an accomplice to the kidnapping.

Two firefighters injured in Quiapo apartment blaze

TWO firemen were slightly injured while putting out an hour-long fire that hit a flower shop and a row of apartments in Quiapo, Manila before dawn yesterday.

Senior Insp. Mario Medina and FO1 Ramon Garcia suffered burns on the face and hands. They were treated at the Philippine General Hospital.

SFO4 Danilo Talusag of the city fire bureau said the blaze started at 12:10 a.m. at the Domingo Flower Shop owned by one Johnny Ang and located at 744 R. Hidalgo Street in Quiapo.

A loud explosion inside the shop preceded the blaze, SFO4 Talusag said. The flames quickly spread to three adjoining commercial-residential apartments.

About P2 million worth of property was destroyed in the blaze, which was placed under control at 1:30 a.m.

Firefighters from the fire station on Tanduay Street, including Medina and Garcia, were among the first to arrive at the scene. *Jerome Aning*

Man slain by neighbor

POLICE are looking for a man who allegedly stabbed to death his neighbor when the latter chanced upon him arguing with his wife in Binondo, Manila last Saturday.

Silverio Delfin Jr., 28, of Area H, Parola Compound, was stabbed on his left chest by his neighbor Ricky Suarez, 28, at about 3 p.m. Saturday, PO3 Rodelio Lingcong of the Western Police District Homicide Division said in his report.

Delfin died while undergoing treatment at the Gat. Andres Hospital eight hours later, Dr. Ruferto Pine told police.

Initial police investigation showed that Delfin went out to buy cigarettes when he saw Suarez and his wife arguing in front of a store.

Probably embarrassed, Suarez turned his rage on the unsuspecting Delfin and planted a fan knife in Delfin's chest, investigation disclosed.

Delfin's body was brought to the Sanctuary Funeral Parlor for autopsy.

Police are preparing homicide charges against Suarez. *Christian V. Esguerra*

QC year-old girl killed in accident

A YEAR-OLD girl was killed and her 28-year-old father was seriously injured when a school service AUV struck them in front of Ever Gotesco Commonwealth in Quezon City late Saturday afternoon.

Mary Danielle Malayan, of Laura Street, Old Balara, Quezon City, died on the spot and her father Danilo was injured after the vehicle driven by Jovito Soriano, 38, of Veteran's Village, Pasong Tamo, Quezon City, hit them, said investigator SPO1 Themistocles Montalban.

The investigator said Soriano's AUV also hit a Mitsubishi Adventure owned by a Roberto Sambajon, of Sauyo Road, Novaliches, Quezon City. Sambajon was not hurt.

Malayan was carrying his daughter in his arms while he crossed Commonwealth Avenue in front of Ever Gotesco when the accident happened at 5:45 p.m., Montalban said.

He said Soriano, driving his Jitney School Service AUV, was not able to swerve in time to avoid the father and daughter.

The impact caused Malayan to drop his daughter, who died on the spot after she hit the pavement. The girl was thrown several meters away, Montalban said.

Malayan was brought to the Gen. Malvar Hospital but he was later transferred to another one, where he was supposed to undergo surgery.

Soriano agreed to settle the case amicably with the victims, including Sambajon.

"He agreed to pay for the child's funeral and for Danilo's hospitalization," Montalban said. "Since they are not well off, Danilo agreed." *Philip C. Tubeza*

Four men arrested for selling hot car

POLICE arrested four suspected car thieves for selling a stolen car in Ermita, Manila early Monday night.

Rogelio Gacusan, 21; Glen Torres, 28; Marlon Livelo, 29; and Reynaldo Chaves, 29, all residents of Sampaloc, Manila, allegedly tried to sell a blue Honda model 1994, to undercover policemen for P20,000.

Acting on an informant's tip, members of the Western Police District Station 5 conducted the bust at about 7 p.m. at the Harbor View parking area on T.M. Kalaw Street in Ermita.

One of the policemen, SPO1 Fred Ramos, was able to negotiate with the suspects through a confidential agent. He said the suspects agreed to his offer of P20,000 but would show him the car only if the money was ready.

SPO1 Ramos met the suspects, who were on board the Honda, at about 6 p.m. Other policemen pounced on the four suspects as soon as SPO1 Ramos handed Torres an envelope containing a wad of fake money intended as payment for the stolen car.

Supt. Miguel Laurel, Station 5 commander, said the car belonged by one Ethel Ramos, a resident of Pink Rose Street, Doña Manuela Subdivision, Pamplona, Las Piñas City.

It was stolen while parked in front of the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City on the night of Jan. 21. *Jerome Aning*

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Ocampo on Luna, Hidalgo

THE HISTORICAL canvas was a popular medium espoused by artists in 19th century Europe. Madrid-based Filipino painters Juan Luna and Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo successfully used this medium to depict allegorically their country's plight. The awards they reaped abroad propelled the Propaganda Movement and inspired their countrymen at home to take up arms against Spain.

Multi-awarded historian Ambeth R. Ocampo focuses on the achievements of Luna and Hidalgo in a lecture on Saturday, Feb. 10, 2001 at the Tambunting-Villonco Hall of the National Museum of the Filipino People (former Department of Finance Building) at Rizal Park in Luneta.

Registration starts at 9:30 a.m. and lecture proper at 10:15 a.m. The lecture is jointly sponsored by the National Museum, the National Commission on culture and the Arts and the Museum Foundation of the Philippines.

NBI to open hotlines for women and kids

WYCOCO

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation is planning to set up 24-hour hotlines to receive information and complaints regarding women and children.

Lawyer Angelique Somera, head of the NBI's Violence Against Children and Women Division, said the hotlines would be installed in their intelligence office to receive calls regarding abuses on women and children.

Somera made the suggestion on Monday during a command conference of NBI officials presided over by newly installed director Reynaldo Wycoco, who spearheaded the formation of women and children's desks when he was still with the Philippine National Police.

Wycoco told NBI top officials, regional directors and chiefs of the bureau's Manila-based units that they should focus on increased output in the agency's "frontline services."

He said that for the year 2000, a total of 50,549 crime, service and miscellaneous cases were brought to the NBI's attention. The agency is planning to recruit more agents, special investigators and other support personnel.

In 2000, the bureau also issued 2,906,254 clearance certificates, an increase of 7.8 percent compared to the previous year, or a daily average of 11,579 clearance applicants a day.

Aside from aiming for an increase in personnel, the NBI is also batting for the acquisition of modern equipment, such as anti-wire tapping devices, to enhance the bureau's operations.

The NBI chief also ordered the recall of all confidential-agent appointments made by his predecessors.

Wycoco said all CA appointments should be properly screened and strictly monitored by his office.

Jerome Aning

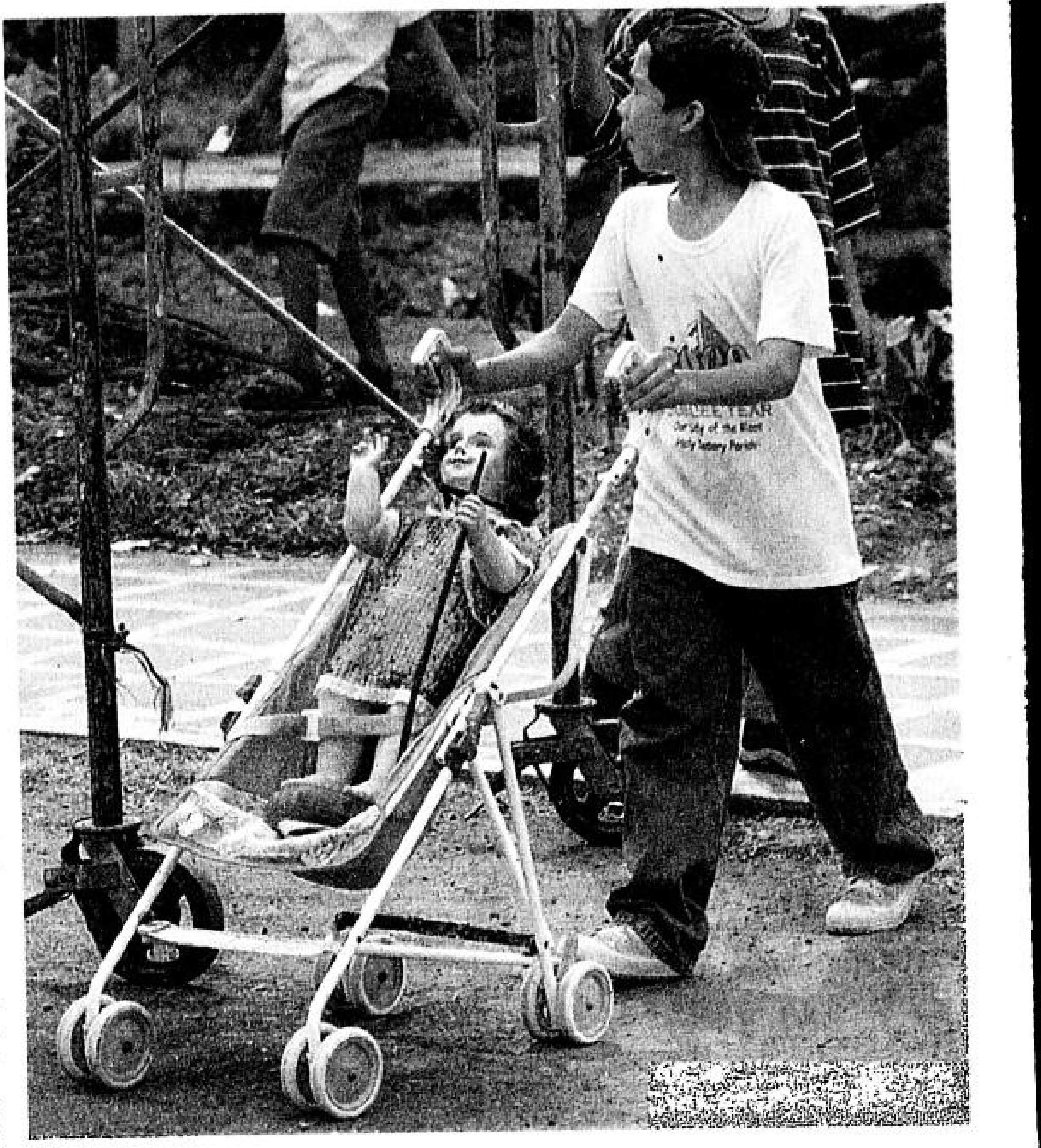
UP College of Dentistry anniversary

THE UP College of Dentistry is celebrating its 86th foundation anniversary Feb. 5-8, 2001 with the theme "Uniting the UPCD Family for Progress and Excellence."

Several activities will be held, to be capped by a program on Feb. 8.

Expected to attend the anniversary are members of the UPM administration, recent board exam topnotchers and other successful examinees, UPCD alumni, faculty and students.

For queries, please call Dr. Marcelle Salinda or Dr. Winston Cham at 524-82-86 during office hours.



CHILDREN AND NIÑOS Boys came with the Sto. Niño in different versions, sizes and modes of transport to the Sto. Niño festival in Pasay City last Sunday. The Sto. Niño is a very influential part of Filipino life.

DENNIS SABANGAN

'Basura busters' keep Navotas streets clean

TRASH littering Navotas' streets? This is a job for the "*basura* (trash) busters."

Every day, scores of volunteer street sweepers get busy clearing the town's sidewalks of rubbish.

The idea of fielding volunteer sweepers came from Mayor Toby Tiangco, who had two objectives in mind: to promote cleanliness in the barangays, and to provide the residents, mostly housewives, a chance to earn money during their spare time.

Tiangco named the project Oplan Kalinisan, which got off the ground in mid-August 2000.

Street sweepers work from 6 to 7:30 a.m., and then from 4 to 5:30 p.m.

The trash they collect is placed in garbage bags which are sealed before being transported to designated pick-up points.

A street sweeper gets paid P50 a day.

Eva Luague, a 26-year-old mother of three, is a street sweeper in Barangay Sipac-Almacen. Her area covers the stretch of road from the fire station to the tip of Almacen Street.

"My being a volunteer street sweeper is a source of fulfillment as I know I am making a contribution in my own small way to the overall improvement of Navotas," she said.

The efforts of the street sweepers do not go unappreciated. The municipal government has launched the search for the Outstanding Street Sweeper.

This year's awardee, who was cited during Navotas Day on Jan. 16, was Lilia Gaviola of Barangay San Rafael Village.

Inquirer columnist tops Philets board election

VETERAN journalist Neal H. Cruz, a columnist of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, topped the recent election of the board of trustees of the Philets Foundation.

The Philets Foundation is composed of former students and graduates of the former Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of the University of Sto. Tomas, considered for many years as the biggest little college of the Pontifical University.

The Philets counts among its roster some of the Philippines' brightest names in journalism, public relations, advertising, public issues, advocacy, business, finance, academe, government and international diplomacy.

Elected along with Cruz is another INQUIRER columnist, Recah Trinidad, as well as Roy Acosta, Romy Abaya, who is a marketing professional in a drug firm, and Nick Rebong.

Completing the 10 new members are Fely Rixhon, Norma Calaguas, Tita Reverente, Vilma Umengan and Quin Baterna.

The five trustees on their last terms are Joe Burgos, Tony Roxas, Manny Azarcon, Vic del Fierro, Jr., and Rey Datu. Dan David, Cecile Laguna, Teri Maniquis, Nando Singson, and Chit Tronqued are the retained board members.

Foundation secretary Vic del Fierro Jr. announced that newly elected board would meet with the remaining trustees and the outgoing officials on Saturday morning, Feb. 3, at 10 a.m. at the Little Green House of Alfredo's along Tomas Morato in Quezon City.

UP High to hold 'Balik-Prom'

THE CLASSES of 1963 and 1964 of the University of the Philippines High School (now UP Integrated School) will hold "Balik-High School Prom" on Feb. 7, 2001.

The reunion, a pre-Valentine's affair, is a reenactment of the 1963 junior-senior prom. It will be held at 7 p.m. at the original venue, the Multi-Purpose Hall of the UPIS.

Apart from the members of the classes from abroad and those based in the Philippines, expected to attend are the teachers of the two classes and members of the current faculty and staff headed by UPIS Principal Eleonora Hermosa.

The program includes dinner and an auction of rare, collectible items to raise funds for the renovation of the Multi-Purpose Hall facilities. Live '60s music will also be provided for dancing.

All members of the two classes are invited to attend. For details, please call Bing Brown King, 921-74-75; Maribel Payumo-Apelo, 434-83-69 or 926-75-73; Angie de Jesus-Ilustre, 426-679; or Mark Javier, 759-47-47.

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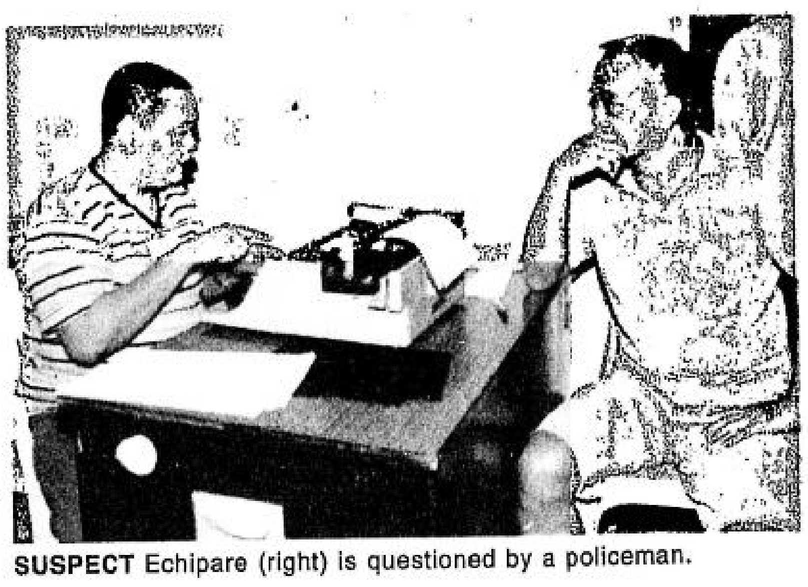
Illegal water trader nabbed



SUSPECT Echipare (right) is questioned by a policeman.

AGENTS of the Philippine National Police and the Non-Revenue Water Task Force of Maynilad Water Services Inc. arrested the operator of an alleged illegal water selling operation in Tondo.

The operation owed Maynilad more than P500.000 in unpaid water bills and was drawing water from an illegal source, investigators said.

Arrested on Jan. 18 was Mario Echipare, 53, of Kagitingan Street, Tondo, Manila. The warrant for his arrest was issued by Judge Felixberto Olalia of the National Regional Trial Court Branch 8, said engineer Joseph Teves of the NRW Task Force.

Teves said Echipare had been placed under surveillance since May 2000 after his assistant, Priscila Aquende, who was arrested also last year, pointed to him as the owner of the illegal water selling business located at the corner of R10 and Capulong streets in Tondo.

The task force permanently closed the illegal connection.

Aquende said Echipare collected the day's earnings, which ranged from P300 to P500. He charged P1 per 20 liters of water, compared to Maynilad's 20 centavos for the same 20 liters, based on the P6.13 per cubic meter that Maynilad charged.

Teves said Echipare is accused of violating RA 8041 or the National Water Crisis Act of 1995. If found guilty, he could be imprisoned for six months to 12 years.

Maynilad president Rafael Alunan III has ordered a crackdown on all illegal connections to reduce unbilled water due to leaks and pilferages, which stands at 66 percent of the total water being supplied daily by the Maynilad system to its West Zone concession area.

The task force has so far apprehended more than 300 water thieves. Six persons have been convicted while more than 100 others are under surveillance.

Tamayo, 'Pip' in LP alliance

TAMAYO

A TELEVISION public service show host, a movie actor and a Lakas-NUCD officer have forged a political alliance in Las Piñas City.

"Tropang Pinoy telemagazine/public service show host Tony Tamayo, Tirso "Pip" Cruz III and Lakas-NUCD Las Piñas chapter chair Gabriel "Ben" Casimiro formalized the alliance by signing the covenant in Tamayo's residence recently.

Various groups are said to be pushing Katropang Tony, as he is popularly known, to run for Las Piñas' lone seat in Congress. Cruz is being groomed as the vice mayoral candidate.

The covenant primarily upholds transparency and public accountability.

Leaders of various groups claimed they were endorsing Tamayo's bid to run for a seat in Congress because of his "incorruptible integrity, continuous developmental work for the poor, charity programs financed solely by the talk show host, competence and leadership skills."

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6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	VERTICAL LIMIT
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8	DOLBY SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
9	DOLBY SURROUND	TABI TABI PO
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12	DOLBY SURROUND	SYOTA NG BAYAN

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6	DOLBY SURROUND	THE YARDS
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BOOBA
9	DOLBY SURROUND	SYOTA NG BAYAN
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11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS

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5	DOLBY SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
6	DOLBY SURROUND	THE YARDS
7	DTS	WHAT WOMEN WANTS
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	VERTICAL LIMIT
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HIGHLANDER
10	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
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5	ULTRA SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
6	ULTRA SURROUND	DUDE
7	ULTRA SURROUND	SYOTA NG BAYAN
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4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TABI TABI PO

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3	ULTRA SURROUND	NAGHUHUMIYAW
4	ULTRA SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
5	ULTRA SURROUND	SUGATANG PUSO
6	ULTRA SURROUND	DUDE
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2	ULTRA SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
3	ULTRA SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
4	ULTRA SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
5	ULTRA SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
6	ULTRA SURROUND	DUDE
7	ULTRA SURROUND	KANGKONG
8	ULTRA SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP

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2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
3	DOLBY SURROUND	BOOBA
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SYOTA NG BAYAN
6	DOLBY SURROUND	TABI TABI PO

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5	
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2	BALAHIBONG PUSA
3	BOOBA
4	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
5	DUDE
6	SYOTA NG BAYAN
7 (DTS)	THE YARDS
8 (SDDS)	WHAT WOMEN WANTS
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4	SYOTA NG BAYAN
5	
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3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
4	SYOTA NG BAYAN
5	WHAT WOMAN WANTS

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2	TABI TABI PO
3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
4	MALIKOT ANG AGOS
5	BOOBA
6	VERTICAL LIMIT

Baclaran LRT Cinema
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	TABI TABI PO
3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	TABI TABI PO
3 (DTS)	VERTICAL LIMIT

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 (DTS)	BOOBA
3 (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
4	TABI TABI PO

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
2	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
3	SYOTA NG BAYAN
4 (DTS)	TABI TABI PO

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
2	SYOTA NG BAYAN
3 (DTS)	TABI TABI PO
4	MALIKOT ANG AGOS
5	BOOBA

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	TABI TABI PO
3	VERTICAL LIMIT

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	TABI TABI PO
3	VERTICAL LIMIT

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0111

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	BOOBA
3	MALIKOT ANG AGOS

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	
2	TABI TABI PO
3	VERTICAL LIMIT

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	VERTICAL LIMIT
2	SYOTA NG BAYAN
3	BOOBA
4	TABI TABI PO

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 243.2783

1 (DTS)	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 (DTS)	VERTICAL LIMIT

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	TABI TABI PO

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	BOOBA
2	SYOTA NG BAYAN
3	TABI TABI PO

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
2	BOOBA
3	HIGHLANDER
4	REMEMBER THE TITANS

Berma
tel 879.2168

1	CLOSED
2	CLOSED

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

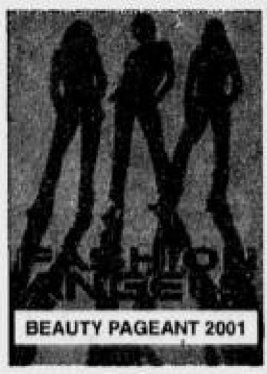
1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
2	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
3	TABI TABI PO
4	VERTICAL LIMIT

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	RED PLANET
2	BOOBA
3	SYOTA NG BAYAN
4 (DTS EX)	VERTICAL LIMIT

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS



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Channel V hosts more activities this year

FOR the year 2001, Channel [V] Philippines is set to conquer the country, taking it island by island.

Ibiza had nothing to say when Channel [V] Philippines and the premier clubs of Metro Manila such as Wherelse, Mas y Mas, Seveneightorange and Insomnia, together with NBK resident DJs Manolet Dario and company flew to pristine Boracay for a two-week mardi gras. It was a smorgasbord of parties for travelers—foreign and local—with an exciting array of themes from Caribbean to jungle to space.

Channel [V] Philippines certainly revolutionized the word "party" as it brought Boracay denizens to its feet and made them dance non-stop all through the nights.

Channel [V] Philippines played Santa Claus over the holidays and showered the beach strip with ultra-cool and never-before-seen [V] merchandise that left all the bikini-clad and sunburned people screaming "Channel [V] Rules!"

VJ Mike Zerrudo and his Club [V] crew scoured the shore and hit the shindig hubs to show viewers how Channel [V] Philippines took Boracay to the edge. Celebrities and foreign visitors strutting all over the place were impressed with the eye-popping celebration. The parties ran simultaneously each night with two camps generating the groove.

While Sauza Zaz had its theme parties at Cocomanga's, Hey Jude and Summer Place, Steve Mills and his crew pumped up the languid afternoon mood with their Sunset Chill-Out Sessions at the Waling-Waling Beach Resorts and their brand of R&B, hip-hop and retro music at Bazzura Bar and Beachcomber Disco.

Last Friday, Channel [V] aired the launch of Slapshock's second album, "Headtrip," at the UP Bahay ng Alumni.

Today, Channel [V] will present The Dawn live at Music Museum. The group is back with their new album, "Prodigal Sun," after a six-year hiatus. Wait for the contest plug on Channel [V] or dial the hotline at 811-3881 to win tickets.

But that's only the appetizer for this year's party menu. Get ready as Channel [V] Philippines spells more parties, freebies, concerts, international artists and a more energized programming guaranteed to add spice to your partying and music lifestyle.

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❷	TABI TABI PO
❸	WHAT WOMEN WANT
❹	THE YARDS
❺	SYOTA NG BAYAN
❻	WHAT WOMEN WANT
❼	BOOBA

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❷	SYOTA NG BAYAN
❸	SISIW ANG KALABAN
❹	WHAT WOMEN WANT
❺	TABI TABI PO
❻	BOOBA

BACOLOD (034)441-0463

❶	REMEMBER THE TITANS
❷	BALAHIBONG PUSA
❸	LITTLE NICKY
❹	HIGHLANDER
❺	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
❻	HOT SPOT

DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	TABI TABI PO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	WHAT WOMAN WANT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	THE YARDS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	BOOBA
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	SYOTA NG BAYAN
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	SYOTA NG BAYAN
MIRAMAR	LARO SA BAGA / PORNOGRAPHER
ODEON	VERTICAL LIMIT
ODEON-2	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
ROBEN	SYOTA NG BAYAN
TANDEM-1	MALIKOT ANG AGOS
TANDEM-2	WHIPPED
TIMES	URBAN LEGEND / BLESS THE CHILD
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	GATAS
ACT-2	ALINDOG NI BARBARA
ACT-3	TURN ON
ACT-4	PALIGAYAHIN MO AKO
CORONET-2	SYOTA NG BAYAN
QUEZON-1	TABI TABI PO
REMAR	SYOTA NG BAYAN
REMAR-2	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	MALIKOT NA AGOS
OCEAN CINEMA-A	ASAL DIMONYO
OCEAN CINEMA-B	DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	REMEMBER THE TITANS
CINEMA-2	THE RED PLANET
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	SYOTA NG BAYAN
CINEMA-2	TABI TABI PO
CINEMA-3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WHIPPED
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	BALAHIBONG PUSA
CINEMA-6	TANGING YAMAN
CINEMA-7	MALIKOT ANG AGOS
CINEMA-8	BOOBA
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	VERTICAL LIMIT
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	WHAT WOMAN WANT
CINEMA-12	DUDE
CINEMA-14	THE YARDS
CINEMA-15	SYOTA NG BAYAN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	TABI TABI PO
CINEMA-3	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	DUDE, WHERE'S MY CAR?
CINEMA-2	WHAT WOMEN WANTS
CINEMA-3	VERTICAL LIMIT
CINEMA-4	THE YARDS
CINEMA-5	WHAT WOMEN WANTS
CINEMA-6	VERTICAL LIMIT

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Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

Nick Joaquin's 'Pinoy Agonistes' opens Feb. 16

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE BIG news in Philippine theater next month is Tanghalang Pilipino's staging of national artist **Nick Joaquin**'s new play, "Pinoy Agonistes," starting on Feb. 16 at Onstage at Greenbelt Cinema.

The play, commissioned by the People Power Foundation, is a contemporary tale about Filipinos in social chaos, reluctantly thrown into the maelstrom of politics, social unrest and ideological confusion.

Ultimately, it is about the Filipino's self-transformation into a responsive, if not responsible citizen.

These "Greek tragedy" reverberations are echoed by the "Agonistes" in the play's title, a Greek word that connotes intense strife.

The play's protagonist, **Leo Galang**, is the inventor of the first Filipino car. He aborts his plan to manufacture the car himself when the Marcos government buys into his business, aided and abetted by his wife, who collaborates with the government to ensure the survival of her publishing company.

But Leo refuses to be exploited. In despair, he plans to emigrate to the United States, but is stopped by members of his family, who want to stay here to fight the oppressive regime.

When Leo learns that **Ninoy Aquino** is about to fly home from exile in the States, he organizes a march to the airport to welcome Ninoy. The play ends with a march of faith, the procession of the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary, and a march to freedom that culminates in the first People Power revolution.

It's deemed providential that Joaquin's play is being staged right after the second People Power uprising earlier this year. **Nonon Padilla** directs the production.

The play's run: Feb. 16-18 at Onstage, then move-over performances on the weekends from Feb. 23 to March 4. Its cast includes **Mitch Valdes, Tessie Tomas, Subas Herrero, Buboy Garrovillo, Apa Ongpin** and **Ronnie Lazaro.**

"Pinoy Agonistes" ends Tanghalang Pilipino's 14th theater season.

Filipino movies on Television

OF the many Filipino movies showing on Viva Cinema 23, these appear to be the most viewable:

Feb. 2, Friday, at 2 p.m., "Julian Makabayan" by **Celso Ad. Castillo**, starring **Christopher de Leon** and **Charo Santos.**

At 6 p.m., **Lino Brocka**'s first film, "Wanted: Perfect Mother," with **Boots Anson Roa** and **Dante Rivero**, and **Snooky Serna** and **Gina Alajar** as child stars.

Feb. 3, Saturday, at 12 midnight, "Segurista." Made destitute by the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo, **Karen (Michelle Aldana)** comes to Manila to earn the one million pesos she needs to start her own business.

She's an insurance underwriter by day and GRO by night and things are going well until she falls in love with one of her regular customers. From then on, it's downhill for her and her family.

Script by **Pete Lacaba** and direction by **Tikoy Aguiluz**. Other leads include **Gary Estrada, Ruby Moreno, Julio Diaz** and **Albert Martinez.**

At 5:45 a.m., "Ang Pinakamagandang Hayop sa Balat ng Lupa," starring **Gloria Diaz** and **Vic Vargas**, directed by Celso Ad. Castillo.

Feb. 7, Wednesday, at 8 p.m., "Sa Hirap at Ginhawa" with **Sharon Cuneta, Gabby Concepcion, Nida Blanca, Leroy Salvador** and **Cherie Gil**. Sharon won best Actress awards from the FAP and Famas for her performance here.

Feb. 15, Thursday, at 12 midnight, "Burlesk Queen"—if this is the **Vilma Santos** starrer.

Feb. 17, Saturday, at 4 p.m. "Talahib at Rosas 2."

Feb. 19, Monday, at 5:30 p.m., Celso Ad. Castillo's "Pagputi ng Uwak, Pagitim ng Tagak," topbilling Vilma Santos and **Bembol Roco.**

Feb. 21, Wednesday, at 12 midnight, Ishmael Bernal's "Working Girls 2."

At 8 p.m., Sana Bukas Pa ang Kahapon," about three friends who find their fortune in the big city. Starring **Hilda Koronel, Dindo Fernando, Jay Ilagan, Lorna Tolentino** and **Ma. Isabel Lopez.**

TV treats

THURSDAY, Feb. 1: On Star Movie's at 7 a.m., "Swing Kids," a musical drama starring **Christian Bale** and **Barbara Hershey.**

On Viva Cinema at 8 a.m., **Kuh Ledesma**'s Boracay concert, "Akuhstic By the Sea."

On Star Movies at 9 a.m., "The Puppet Masters," an alien thriller starring **Donald Sutherland.**

On Star Movies at 11 a.m., "Simon Birch" with **Ian Michael Smith** and **Ashley Judd.**

On Viva Cinema at 8 p.m., "Darna, Ang Pagbabalik," with **Anjanette Abayari** and **Edu Manzano.**

On Star Movies at 9 p.m., "The Thin Red Line" with **George Clooney, Sean Penn, Jim Caviezel** and **Ben Chaplin.**

On the National Geographic Channel at 10 p.m., "Aids Awareness: Staying Alive," an all-star musical extravaganza for a cause.

On Star Movies at 11:45 p.m., "Extramarital" with **Traci Lords** and **Jeff Fahey.**

ARTISTS support "Awit Abroad," an album for the Overseas Filipino Worker: (above, from left) Miriam Pantig, Jo Awayan, Nora Aunor, Cindy Rosas and Kelly Grace Salcedo; (top, from left) Richard Villanueva, Nonoy Zuñiga, Claudine Barretto, Juan Rodrigo and Aldoe Rubee.

Artists record songs for OFWs

"AWIT Abroad," an album compilation of all original songs (OPM) of Roland O. Amaranto, an OFW based in Jedah, was recently launched at Vincent's in Shangri-La Edsa Complex, Mandaluyong City.

The project is produced by Artistika Records and Poppsinc. NGO groups led by Migrante Int'l. and Rotary Club of San Juan West, R.I. District 3800 has been supportive of this musical album project.

Various artist-interpreters of the songs include Nora Aunor, Nonoy Zuñiga, Juan Rodrigo, Claudine Barretto, Miriam Pantig, Jo Awayan, Cindy Rosas, Aldoe Rubee, Richard Villanueva and Kelly Grace Salcedo. The artists pledged full support to the laudable and timely endeavor.

The project puts into music the travails, experiences and aspirations of OFWs around the world as seen through the eyes of one of their own.

The project's main concern is for our OFWs, who number by the millions and are now the backbone of our economy, to be given a face and a voice, so this musical album honors them.

The songs in the album are mostly Tagalog with only one English composition.

Nora Aunor sang "Aking Mahal;" Nonoy Zuñiga did a solo cut "Makapaghanapbuhay Lang" and a duet with Kelly Grace Salcedo in "Dakila Ka;" Juan Rodrigo interpreted "Kabayan" and "Huwag Mag-alala;" Claudine Barretto sang "I do;" Miriam Pantig recorded "Maayos na Buhay" and a duet number with Jo Awayan in "Para sa Inyo, OFW sa Buong Mundo;" Aldoe Rubee did "O.T.;" Cindy Rosas interpreted a song for the seamen, "Doon;"c and Richard Villanueva did the "Ramadan" song.

"Awit Abroad" is a showcase of the greatness and sacrifices OFWs have done.

(For details about the album call Nelia Lim, over-all project consultant, at 729-3898 or e-mail 258218 @easycall.com.ph)

Timely political thriller

WITH a recently-appointed president and a fresh political mandate in the offing, the Filipino people have once again proven the power of peaceful protest. Sparked by allegations of anomalies during the long-drawn impeachment process, the whole exercise has given us ample opportunity to pause and reflect on the pertinent points regarding the credibility of our elected officials.

Who draws the line between a high-ranking government official's public and private life? What criteria are to be used when evaluating a would-be politician's imminent appointment? Can he still be judged by his sins of youth even when such reckless capers have long been forgotten and stashed away with other skeletons in his closet? And what if such dark and grimy secrets are unearthed and used to smear his credibility?

For its opening salvo for the year, Giant Pictures presents "The Contender," a taut and gripping tale of political intrigue starring Jeff Bridges, Gary Oldman, Joan Allen, Sam Elliott and Christian Slater.

JEFF Bridges plays an American president in "The Contender," with Joan Allen as the controversial vice president and Christian Slater.

The story begins with the United States government being drawn into a political vacuum with the sudden death of its vice-president. The President (Jeff Bridges) is then faced with the daunting task of selecting a replacement.

After careful deliberation, he appoints Senator Laine Hanson (Allen). The confirmation process, however, is dogged with objections from both political parties. Subsequently, she is asked to sit in front of Congress as her competence and character are put on trial. However, controversy erupts when fierce Congressman Shelly Runyon (Oldman) digs up secret information about her involvement in some sexually deviant escapades during her college days. But she will not back down even if it means her personal destruction.

Written and directed by Rod Lurie, "The Contender" was produced by Scott Shiffman, Steve Loglisci, Gary Oldman, Maurice Leblond, Rainer Bienger, Mark Frydman, James Spies, Douglas Urbanski and Willi Baer.

Released in the US by Dreamworks Pictures, "The Contender" opens in Metro Manila theaters on Feb. 7.

'PHANTOM OF THE OPERA'

Asia Argento plays Christine in the latest film adaptation of the Gaston Leroux novel, "Phantom of the Opera," by her father, Italian horror-master Dario Argento ("Stendhal Syndrome," "Opera," "Trauma," "Deep Red," "Suspiria," "Inferno," "Phenomena," "The Bird With the Crystal Plummage"). As filmmaker, Argento pursues his opus from a totally different viewpoint from that of which audiences have become accustomed to. The latest screen adaptation is co-scripted by Roman Polanski veteran Gerard Brach. Julian Sands plays Erik, an astonishingly handsome man enveloped by a dark side. To many who acknowledge his existence, he is known as the Phantom of the Opera. And his legend reverberates in the Paris Opera House. Andrea Di Stefano is Raoul, who makes his claim to the beautiful songbird.

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THE YARDS 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00	WHAT WOMEN WANT 11:40, 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00	VERTICAL LIMIT 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00

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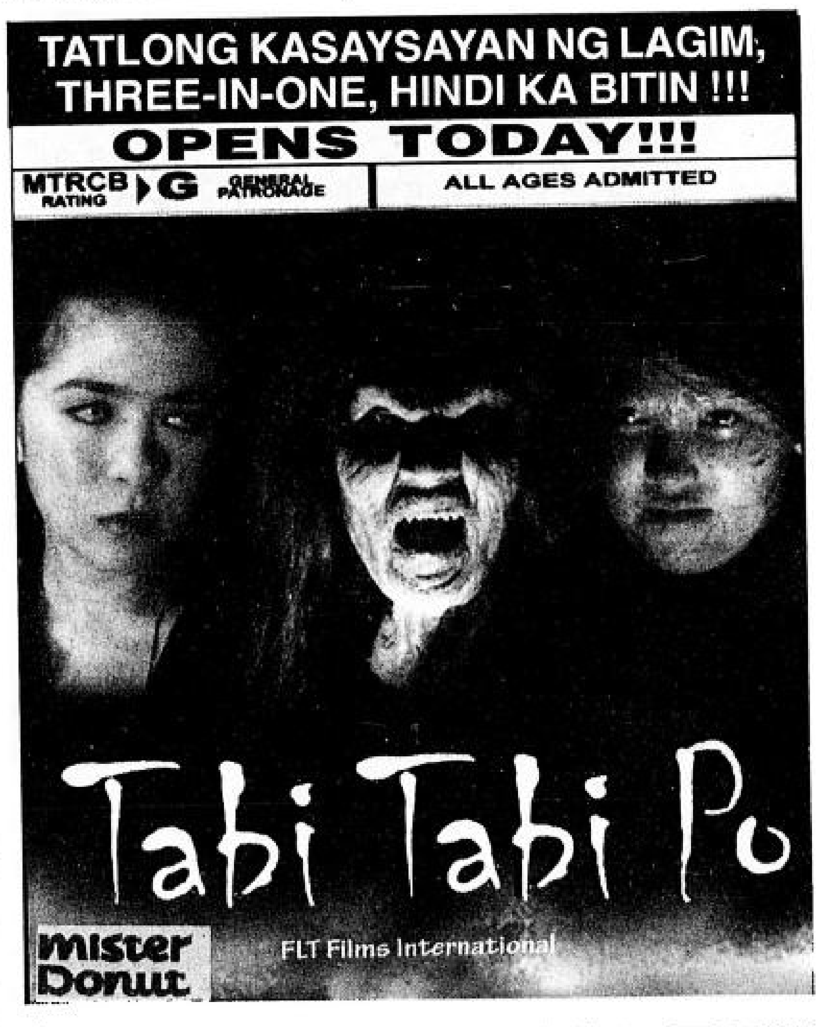

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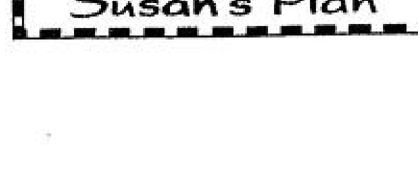

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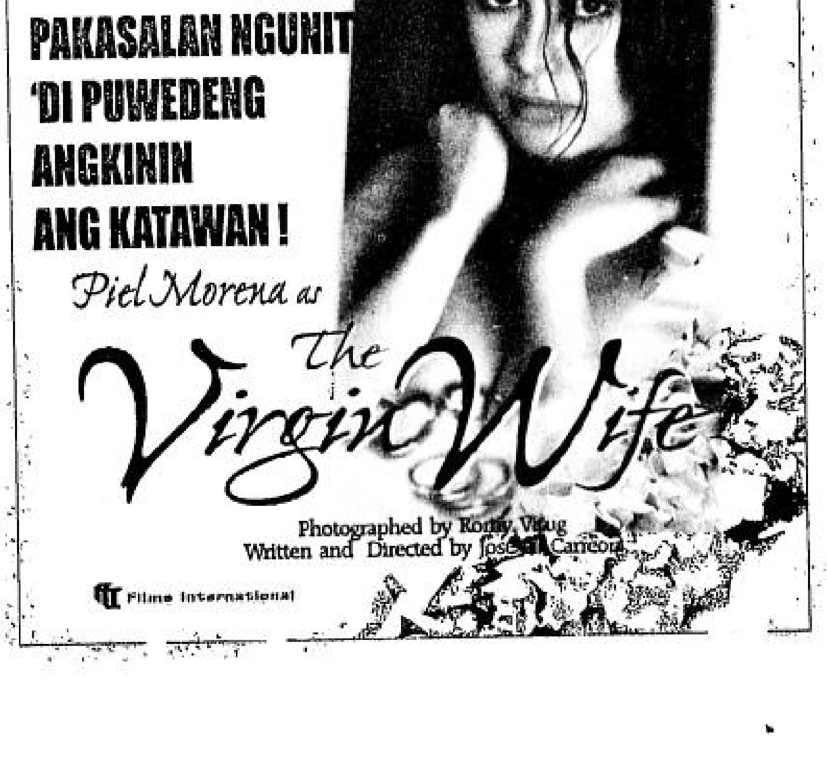

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The Virgin Wife
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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Regine, Jaya sing songs of love and friendship

"INDEPENDENT WOMEN:" Regine Velasquez and Jaya team up in a one-night Valentine concert.

FOR THE first time, real-life girl friends and pop divas Regine Velasquez and Jaya team-up for an evening of electrifying entertainment in their pre-Valentine offering, "Independent Women."

Although both artists have guested in each other's shows in the past and have collaborated in different capacities both onstage and on TV, "Independent Women" is their first ever back-to-back concert performance.

Since the project was first broached by producer Maxi-Media International late last year, the two singers have been thrilled with the prospect of finally sharing the stage for a full-length concert.

Considered as the two best female voices in the local recording scene, Regine and Jaya may be pitted against each the other in the show. However, the two artists bring to "Independent Women" their own distinct personalities and singing styles that complement, rather than compete, with each other.

Each number in the repertoire was carefully selected to bring out each other's strengths as performers. But the general objective was to come up with a fun, entertaining show that will be the perfect date-concert prior to Valentine's Day.

While Regine and Jaya will sing songs about love of the romantic kind, they will also celebrate friendships, personal freedom and self-worth.

"Independent Women" goes onstage Feb. 10, Saturday, 8 p.m. at the PICC Plenary Hall. Under the musical direction of Marc Lopez, the show also features The Opera on back-up vocals and will be staged by Maxi-Media's resident director, Rico Mortel.

"Independent Women" is a production of Maxi-Media International and is presented by Dolce Aura by Avon in cooperation with Nescafé Frothé and Carnation Coffeemate.

The show is also brought to you by 88.3 Citylite, 100.3 The Hive, 103.5 Klite, 105.1 Crossover and Joey@92.3 Rhythms.

Tickets at P300, P600, P900 and P1,400 are available at all National Bookstore and Robinson's Ticketworld outlets (891-5610) and at Maxi-Media office (813-8999/893-7737).

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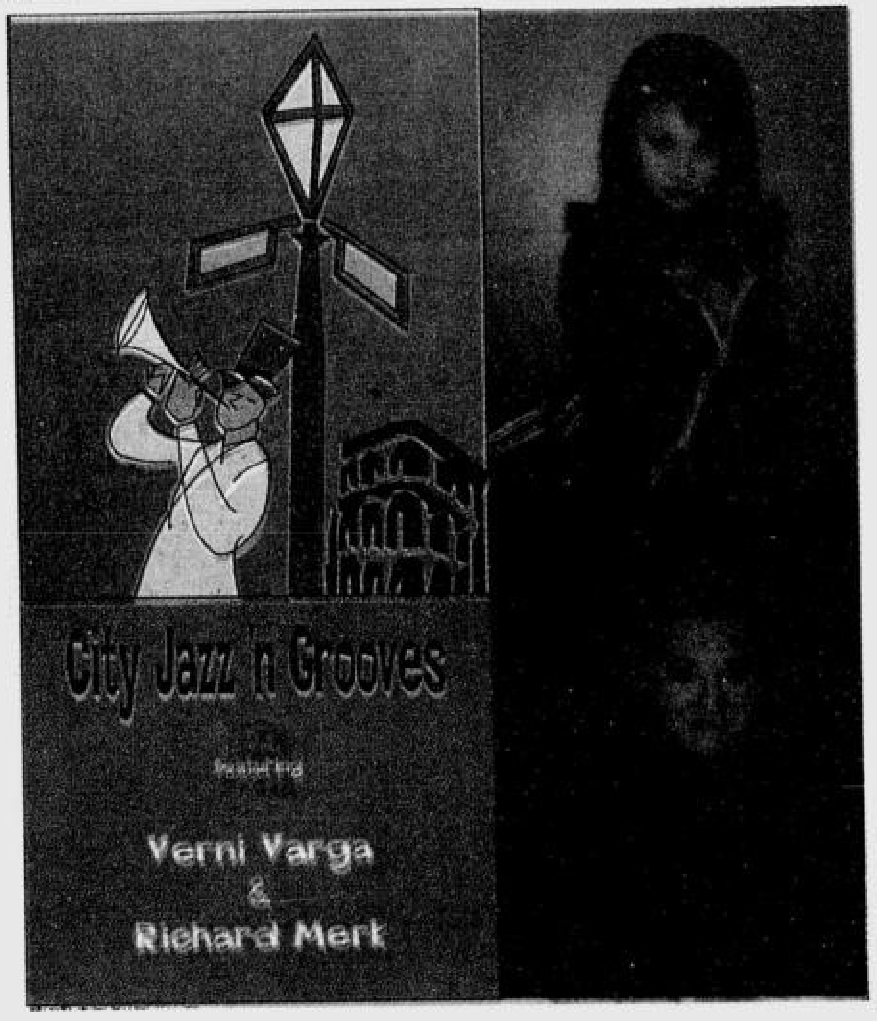

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SOUTH Border. (from left) Butch Victoriano, Jay Durias, Paul Benitez, Luke Mejares, Tata Balane and Ric Junasa (front, seated).

South Border goes savvy

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

WHAT'S the edge of Southborder over other bands?

The group's long-time manager, **Cesar Buendia**, will tell you half a dozen reasons.

South Border has put up their official production arm, which is a spinoff from their talent management company.

Called SB Pro, the outfit assures a steady stint for the group in live performances and recording. SB Pro mounts concerts of the band, especially during months when there are no offers from producers for live shows.

At the helm of SB Pro are Buendia as executive director, with **Jephrey Bernas** and **Jojo Pascasio** as project directors. Board members are the six guys who compose South Border—**Butch Victoriano, Paul Benitez, Luke Mejares, Tata Balane, Ric Junasa** and **Jay Durias**—and **Sharon Inductivo**, the group's personal manager.

SB Pro started nearly two years ago, after lead singer **Brix Ferraris** left the group to go solo. The first project of the production was to conduct the search for the new lead vocalist of the group at Ateneo de Manila University campus.

Of course, the search yielded Luke Mejares, a Cebuano who is also an avowed South Border fan. Today, Luke has undoubtedly gained his own following.

"It's about time we produce South Border's own concerts," Buendia said.

"The production outfit works both ways," Bernas added. "It's an advantage for us and for the group. We can mount the shows we want for the band.

"We can control the shows in terms of budget, unlike with an outside producer with a limited budget. We are able to sort out the internal matters and work for a better show."

SB Pro takes care of the posters, tickets, streamers and billboards for the concerts of the group.

Even if it's a lean season, Buendia said the production arm could sustain the income and exposure of South Border.

"They get double income—their talent fees and their share in the production," Buendia explained. "We were also able to provide a staff for the members, their costumes and a publicist who takes care of their print media and TV exposures."

Having a production arm also has proven to be more convenient for South Border.

"If any of the members or the group itself is facing a legal battle, the outfit will shoulder the lawyer's fees," Buendia said. "Other expenses for rehearsals, regular dancers and publicity photos are also paid for by the outfit."

SB Pro has an office with a staff and equipment like phones, fax machines and computers. "It allows us to deal with producers more formally," Buendia said. "By putting up a production outfit which earns, we are able to spend for other things which the group needs. Now, even their regular workouts, voice lessons and speech power classes are shouldered by the outfit."

South Border is now working on their fourth album, which they expect to release during the first quarter of this year. "It will be for the international markets," Buendia pointed out.

This early, some of the cuts can be downloaded from the website of PlanetMG.com.

In jail

JAY Durias, who composed most of the songs of South Border, is now being detained at the National Bureau of Investigation on charges of qualified theft. The complaint for robbery was filed by businessman **Elmer Mañosca**, owner-manager of Southern Bulls resto-bar on Timog Avenue, Quezon City, where the group started performing in 1998.

Mañosca alleged that Durias stole recording equipment, a personal computer and a Rolex watch when the latter vacated an apartment, which Mañosca was leasing to him along Timog Ave.

Mañosca filed the complaint before the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office on Sept. 5. Two hearings were scheduled, but according to Durias' management outfit, the South Border keyboardist was never furnished with a copy of the complaint, nor did he receive any subpoena to appear at either hearings.

The records of investigation confirmed that no subpoena was ever issued and served on Durias. The investigation was terminated on Oct. 4.

However, on Oct. 14, only 10 days later, a resolution was issued recommending the filing of a criminal information against Durias for qualified theft, and no bail was recommended.

Durias received the notice of the prosecutor's resolution on Jan. 11.

A source told us Durias was reportedly only a victim of the falling-out between Buendia and Mañosca, after the latter agreed to co-produce South Border's concert in Pangasinan, but left the group with a debt of P90,000 in professional fees.

SB Pro issued this statement to the entertainment press:

"Our hearts are heavy (because of) the stream of inaccurate and misleading reports regarding the case that Jay now finds himself embroiled in.

"Jay bought the recording equipment using the credit card of his good friend, **Marvin Querido**, whom most of you know. Jay paid for the charges as soon as they were reflected in Marvin's monthly statements of account from the credit card company.

"All the pertinent sales invoices and the credit card billings for these equipment have been submitted to the Department of Justice as proof of Jay's ownership of the recording equipment.

"Jay has no intentions of fleeing from justice. In truth, Jay and the rest of his bandmates in South Border are seeking justice.

"Jay wants his side of the story to be heard, having had no opportunity to do so at the (prosecutor's) investigation, in violation of his constitutional rights."

Martin's Joyce

DOES the name **Joyce Rayala** ring a bell?

She's a member of the Hotlegs Dancers who are now on tour with **Martin Nievera** for his "XV3" concert series.

A source told us that during Martin's concert in Davao, the first in the series, he reportedly called up Joyce in the middle of the night and asked her to come to his room.

When the dancer said, "How about **Katrina (Ojeda)**?" Martin reportedly told her, "Break *na kami*."

Martin was even said to have requested for Joyce to join the tour.

So is she the Joyce that Martin is seriously pursuing and not sexy actress **Joyce Jimenez**?

When we asked Martin on the phone last week, he categorically denied making a pass at Joyce Rayala.

"If ever I'll call any of the dancers, it's because I want to have a night cap with all of them, after the concert," Martin said. "We usually do that."

Martin said our source must have interpreted his phone call in a wayward way.

The Hotlegs will join Martin for two more shows in his "XV3: The Aftershock" series. He will hold a birthday concert at the Ultra Football Field this Saturday, Feb. 3, and will cap the series with a concert in Baguio on Feb. 10.

Joey is over-age

IS IT true that erstwhile MTV veejay **Joey Mead** is being wooed by **Stella Marquez Araneta** to join this year's search for Binibining Pilipinas?

Joey has the height and the exotic Filipina looks, which are important requisites to being a beauty queen.

But we heard that other participants in this year's pageant have been complaining because Joey did not undergo auditions. Moreover, she's past the age limit for candidates—she's 27 and a candidate has to be from 18-25 years old only.

New photo

TO GIVE in to countless readers and friends who have been bugging me to change my photo for this regular entertainment column, I am finally doing it.

Thanks to noted lensman **Bien Bautista**, who took the shot—a year after he offered to do it for me when we met on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Rome in February last year. And to makeup artist **Mario Alondra** who did a makeover for me before I went to Bien's studio.

Verni Varga performs at Hard Rock

SHE'S performed for the royalty of Thailand, the Sultan of Brunei and a packed concert hall in New York, but as far as she is concerned, nothing beats the local audience. For one, Filipinos are harder to please, but more appreciative when they do like your performance.

Verni Varga could very well rest on her laurels, having performed with the best artists in the local scene, done "Evita" for the stage in the late '80s, done vocals for Bong Penera's Batucada, waxed albums as well as performed abroad.

In case you've been wondering why Verni has been scarce in the scene of late, it is because she is now very much a family woman—what with a brood of three children, one of whom is 17-year-old Katrina, who seems to be following in the footsteps of her famous mom.

But Verni has agreed to have a rare show tonight, Jan. 31, at Hard Rock Café in Makati, back to back with jazz prince Richard Merk. The "Jazz n' Grooves" concert is being presented by Citylite 88.3, a pioneer in promoting jazz music, in cooperation with Globelines and Pacific Internet.

Verni's repertoire will include Dianne Schur's "The Very Thought of You," the latest versions (with rhythms) of "Close To You" and "I Will Survive," as well as the old standard cut "Stardust."

It is likely that she and Richard will render "My Favorite Things."

VARGA. To sing with Richard Merk.

BUSINESS

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GMA, execs to meet over appointments row

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is set to meet with leaders of top business groups tomorrow (Thursday night) apparently to address their growing disenchantment over her decision to fill up the Cabinet with traditional politicians.

A source from the Cabinet said the President would primarily discuss her economic reform agenda with businessmen but she would also tackle the business groups' concern about the lack of transparency and the undue bias for politicians in her Cabinet choices.

The source said the meeting would be held a day before Ms Macapagal would make her first formal speaking engagement before the country's business community.

Among the business groups that will attend Thursday's meeting with the President is the Makati Business Club, which openly criticized the Cabinet appointments for "being political concessions" just a few days after the new President assumed office.

It is crucial for the new administration to get the full support of the business community considering its significant role in mounting the "Estrada resign" movement, which led to a change in Malacañang occupants.

MBC executive director Guillermo Luz said there was no specific agenda set for the Thursday meeting but the business community would welcome discussions on the Cabinet choices.

The MBC said it was "surprised and concerned" about the Cabinet selection process wherein the appointees so far have mostly been ex-senators and ex-congressmen.

It noted that President Macapagal had promised that her government would usher in a new political order by bringing in new and young faces in her Cabinet, but her Cabinet choices have shown that she was holding on to the past.

The MBC also chided the President for not heeding the recommendations of a five-member search committee composed of former Civil Service Commission chief Patricia Sto. Tomas, former Neda and PMS official Aniceto Sobrepeña, former DPWH Secretary Toto Escuar, Karen Abella of the Development Academy of the Philippines, and Tina Abad of the Ateneo School of Government. The committee was tasked to submit names to the executive secretary and the Presidential Management Staff for consideration to Cabinet positions.

MAYNILAD WARNS MWSS

No rate increase, no funding for expansion

By Doris C. Dumlao

MAYNILAD Water Services Inc., the water concessionaire controlled by the Lopez conglomerate, has threatened to shelve P6 billion in fresh investments unless the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System approves its rate increase this year.

Maynilad president Rafael Alunan III told reporters that Maynilad's financial viability would be seriously affected without implementing a rate increase to hedge against foreign exchange losses.

"We've warned the MWSS that if they bring us beyond the brink of financial collapse or to the point of illiquidity, we may have to slash back on capital expenditures until they grant us the Cera (currency exchange rate adjustment) which, in turn, will trigger a positive response from our term-loan lenders," Alunan said.

Without the Cera, Alunan noted that creditors would not even sit down on the negotiating table with Maynilad and, thus, prevent it from raising new funds to expand its services.

"In such a case we'd have to cut down on our capex. There will be no new capex for this year. And that's a pity because my capex program for three years from 2000 to 2002 calls for an investment of about P14 billion of which P8 billion was programmed for last year. So we still have a balance of P6 billion, which is a good money to assist the economy," Alunan explained.

Maynilad's new investments were meant to be used to replace 96 kilometers of pipes, install 1,000 new valves and 600 new fire hydrants, undertake a leak detection program covering more than 2,000 kilometers of pipes, repair 35,000 leaks and replace 200,000 water meters.

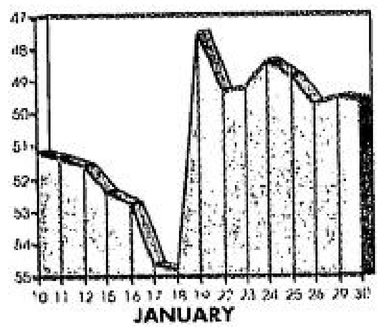
Alunan said Maynilad could not understand what was taking the MWSS so long to implement its petition for a rate increase, which had actually been approved in principle last year.

Maynilad operates the west zone of the 50-year concession of the MWSS that was bid out by the government as part of its privatization program in late 1998. This covers Valenzuela, Navotas, Malabon, Caloocan, parts of Manila and Quezon City, Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Bacoor, Imus, Kawit, Noveleta and other parts of Cavite.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY RONNIE CABUANG

Peso-Dollar Rate

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As of 5 p.m.,
Jan. 30, 2001

¥116.54 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 116.54 as of 5 p.m., Jan. 30, 2001

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Jan. 30, 2001

STOCK MARKET

Stocks end down

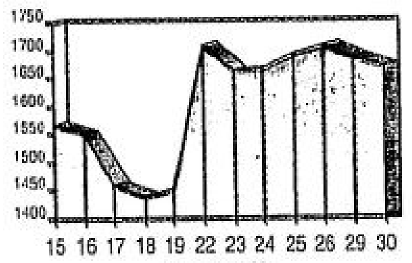
SHARES lost steam for the second day in a row yesterday with short-term players cashing out to secure profits from last week's rally.

Traders said some market players also turned cautious after seeing that foreign funds were not entering the market in droves.

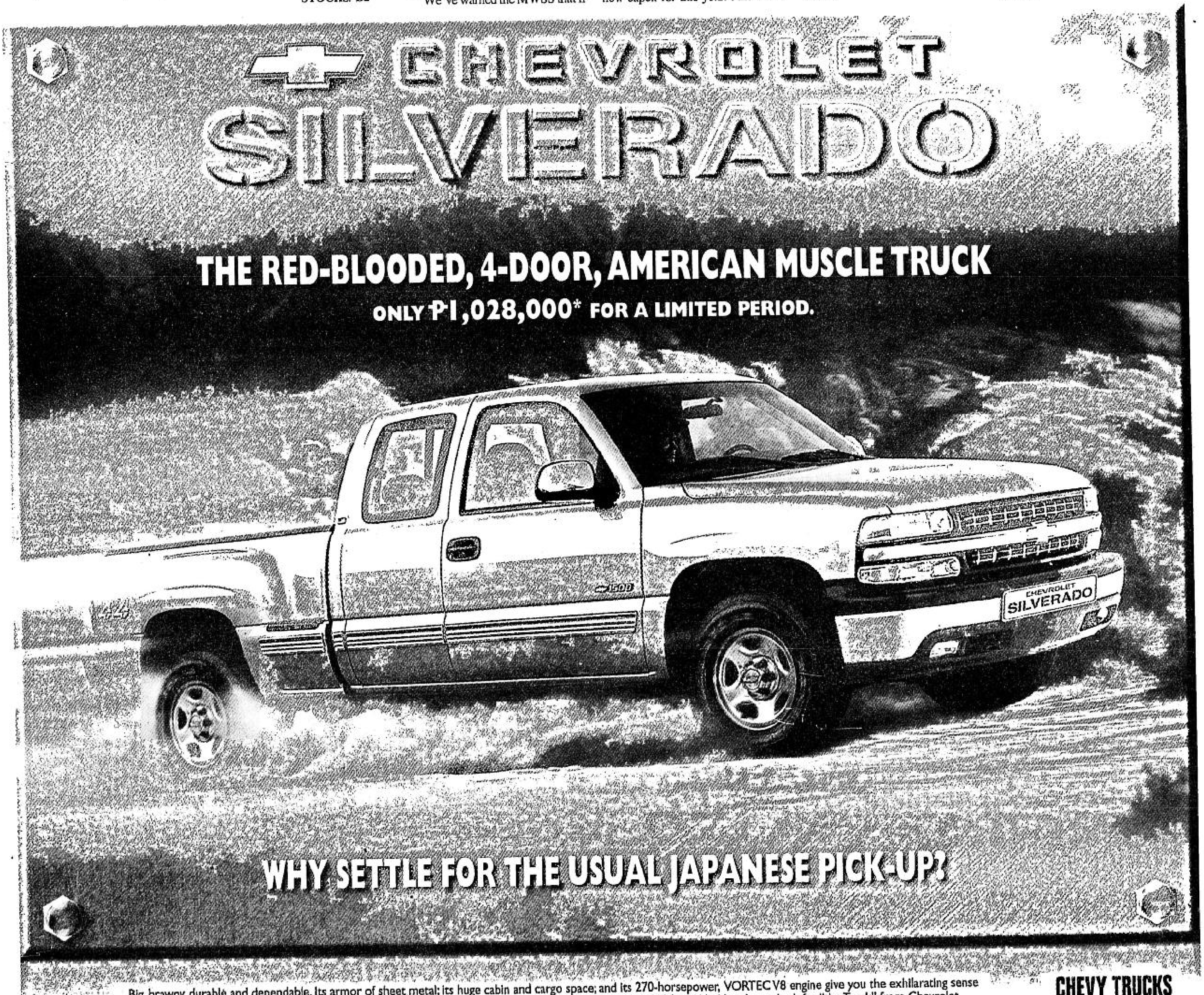
The 33-share composite index lost 17.85 points, or 1.06 percent, to end at 1,668.43 after trading in a 25-point range. The index has lost 39.75 points,

STOCKS/ B2

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B2)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ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN

Banks' FCDU loans down 10%

By Clarissa S. Batino

DOLLAR loans extended by the banking system declined by 10.7 percent as of end-September last year to $6.48 billion from $7.26 billion in the same period the previous year.

The amount was also 5.4 percent lower than the end-June level of $6.84 billion, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas records showed. Banks extend dollar loans through their Foreign Currency Deposit Units (FCDUs).

Bank analysts attributed the decline in FCDU loans to the steep fall of the peso and the economic slowdown brought about by the political problems that hit the country under the previous administration. As business slowed down, demand for dollar loans dropped.

From an exchange rate of P43 to $1 in July, the peso traded at about 45 to $1 in late August to September.

BSP said the level of FCDU loans was expected to drop further in the last three months of last year as the peso dropped to historic lows against the US dollar hitting 51.48 to $1 in October. The peso reached 54.79 to $1 a few days before President Macapagal-Arroyo was sworn into office.

The central bank said exporters remained the top borrowers of FCDU loans accounting for 37 percent of the total or $2.407 billion. Of the amount, 92 percent or $2.21 billion went to commodity exporters and the balance to service exporters.

Other big FCDU borrowers as of September last year were public utilities, accounting for $1.547 billion or 24 percent of the total and oil companies, $454 million or 7 percent of the total.

The BSP said the maturity profile of the FCDU loan portfolio as of end-September had improved as short-term accounts or those maturing in one year declined to 50.1 percent from 51.7 percent in end-July. It said the ratio of FCDU loans to deposit as of end-September was 47 percent.

The BSP said that the medium- and long-term accounts registered by banks at 49.4 percent of the total FCDU loan portfolio as of end-September was the highest level since 1992.

FCDUs represent mainly foreign currency deposits of overseas Filipino workers. "This is why our FCDU deposits are more stable compared to those of the other countries," a BSP official said.

Banks started operating separate FCD units in 1983 which then had combined funds of only $600 million. The combined share of four local universal banks and a foreign bank branch accounted for 42 percent of the total FCDU loans.

Shell, Caltex insist on shelving IPOs

DESPITE improving stock market conditions, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Caltex Philippines Inc. insisted yesterday on shelving their initial public offerings slated under the oil deregulation law for late next month.

Top officials of Caltex and Shell said in separate interviews that they would lose a lot of money should they offer shares to the public on or before Feb. 28.

Caltex Philippines country chair Nicholas Florio said the local stock market was "not buoyant enough."

The key stock index staged its biggest gain ever after Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took over as the country's 14th president, restoring investor confidence in one of last year's worst-performing markets.

Her predecessor, Joseph Estrada, who lost support of his Cabinet, the military and the public, left office on Jan. 20 after a two-and-a-half year tenure amid charges of corruption.

On Jan. 22, the first trading day after Ms Macapagal's assumption of office, the Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 18 percent to 1,708.06, the biggest gain since the index was compiled in 1987.

Since then, the index had stayed above 1,600. It closed yesterday at 1,668.40, down 1.06 percent.

The recent surge in the market, however, has failed to convince Pilipinas Shell and Caltex Philippines that an initial public offering has become feasible.

"There has not been a significant change in the market. We are not in a position to meet the February deadline," Pilipinas Shell's Florio told the INQUIRER.

He said representatives of Pilipinas Shell and Caltex Philippines had met with acting Energy Secretary Ben-Hur Salceda to discuss how they could defer their public offerings without violating the oil industry deregulation law.

The law required these two companies to offer at least 10 percent of their shares to the public on or before Feb. 28.

Pilipinas Shell will consider offering shares to the public if the index reaches 2,500, according to company chair Oscar Reyes.

"We would still want some flexibility. An IPO at this time would not be successful and could affect our bottom lines," said Reyes.

A spokesperson for Petron Corp. said earlier an amendment to the oil industry deregulation law might be needed before Pilipinas Shell and Caltex Philippines could defer their initial public offerings this year.

"If the IPO is part of the deregulation law, an amendment may be needed. We have to look into the requirement of the law," Petron spokesperson Antonio Pelayo told the INQUIRER.

Pelayo said Petron "understands the predicament that they (Caltex and Shell) are in. The stock market is down and the economy is really not good. Timing is really very important."

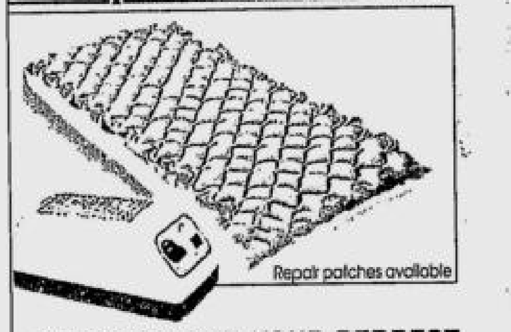
"But at the end of the day, parameters have to be drawn," he said.

Pilipinas Shell and Caltex Philippines—the industry's No. 2 and No. 3—have asked the Department of Justice's opinion on whether they can delay their offerings until market conditions improve.

Shares of the country's biggest oil firm, Petron, are already being traded.

Caltex Philippines and Pilipinas Shell have already asked the Department of Finance and the Securities and Exchange Commission to allow them to defer their IPOs.

In a joint position paper, Pilipinas Shell and Caltex Philippines said an IPO at this time "is likely to have material and negative consequences for the Philippine government, the investment community, the faith of investors in the economy, in general, and the securities market, in particular." *Christine A. Gaylican*



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DISCLOSURES

THE BOARD of **iPeople Inc.** has approved the infusion of P11.25 million in **IEWorks Inc.** A shareholders agreement was signed by the iPeople Inc., IEWorks Inc. and stockholders of IEWorks Inc.

* * *

MANILA Mining Corp. resumed its milling operations yesterday following its receipt of an authority to construct and operate a tailings pond from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

* * *

QNET Communications Inc., a wholly owned company of **A.JO.Net Holdings Inc.,** entered into two separate agreements with **Fujitsu Philippines Inc.** covering the lease of computer hardware equipment and computer software from Fujitsu and the free use of 200 Fujitsu client software.

* * *

MANULIFE Financial Corp. disclosed that on Jan. 25, 2001 the company had completed the acquisition of **Daihyaku Mutual Life Insurance Co.**'s minority interest in **Manulife Century Life Insurance Co.** making it a wholly owned subsidiary of Manulife Financial.

* * *

GLOBE Telecom Inc. announced the extension of its offer to exchange all outstanding unregistered senior notes due in 2009 for registered notes also due in 2009 up to 5 p.m. of Feb. 16, 2001.

* * *

ELECTED as directors of **Philippine Tobacco Flue-Curing and Redrying Corp.** were Alonzo Q. Ancheta, Cesar A. Battung, Carlos G. Dominguez, Conrado C. Gozun, Patricio L. Lim, Jose O. Leviste Jr., Bienvenido A. Tan Jr., Bienvenido A. Tan III and Emmeline S. Huang.

* * *

UNIOIL Resources & Holdings Co. Inc. accepted the resignation of Mariza Santos-Tan as company president and Semeon S. Cua as treasurer. Appointed to replace them were Santiago Cua and Rolando Castro as president and treasurer, respectively. *Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research*

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of January 30, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	180.0	219	175	190	200,480
Bank of the Phil. Islands	72.00	72	71	71.5	250,200
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	57.00	57	56.5	56.5	126,900
First E-Bank Corp.	2.00	2	2	2	8,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	238.0	238	234	235	25,040
Philippine National Bank	29.50	32	29.5	31.5	28,400
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.72	1.72	1.64	1.64	290,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	.3900	.39	.39	.39	50,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1350	1355	1350	1355	4,780
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1125	1125	1120	1120	5,310
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	49.00	49	48	48.5	11,200
Diversified Fin. Network	9.70	10	9.7	10	422,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	.6800	.68	.64	.64	1,460,000
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	1.74	1.9	1.74	1.9	28,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	730.0	750	710	750	1,980
Island Info and Tech Inc.	.0675	.0675	.065	.0675	9,900,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	.4500	.45	.45	.45	860,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	4.00	4	3.95	3.95	32,000
Piltel	.7400	.74	.72	.72	340,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	.4200	.42	.42	.42	150,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	920.0	920	915	920	3,470
Ivantage Corp.	1.08	1.08	1	1	1,250,000
Philweb.com Inc.	.0925	.0925	.085	.085	594,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. "A"	55.00	55	54.5	54.5	9,800
Manila Electric Co. "B"	57.00	57	55.5	57	902,800
Petron Corp.	1.90	1.96	1.82	1.86	12,860,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	777,000
Int'l Container Term'l SV	1.26	1.28	1.2	1.24	7,989,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	.4000	.4	.4	.4	30,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	.1800	.18	.18	.18	100,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	761,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc. .	.5400	.54	.54	.54	310,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	.8100	.81	.81	.81	30,000
Union Cement Corp.	.7000	.72	.7	.72	6,410,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	2.70	2.7	2.65	2.7	10,957,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	11.50	11.75	11.5	11.5	672,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	33.50	34.5	33.5	34	181,700
Pancake House Inc.	1.58	1.62	1.58	1.58	115,000
RFM Corp.	1.00	1	1	1	5,260,000
Swift Food Inc.	1.00	1	1	1	40,000
San Miguel Corp. "A"	50.00	50	49	50	138,900
San Miguel Corp. "B"	60.50	62	60	62	264,800
Phil Tob Flue Cur & Redry	10.50	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
Vitarich Corp.	.4600	.47	.46	.47	40,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	8.30	8.3	8.2	8.2	940,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	112,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12.50	12.5	12	12	2,100
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.20	1.2	1.1	1.1	648,000
A. Soriano Corp.	.3200	.32	.32	.32	20,000
APC Group Inc.	.2500	.25	.22	.22	1,050,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	.0060	.006	.006	.006	22,000,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.05	3.05	2.95	3	4,800,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	.2000	.2	.2	.2	50,000
Crown Equities Inc.	.2900	.29	.28	.28	450,000
Southeast Asian Cement	.2500	.25	.25	.25	770,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	.6100	.62	.5	.6	5,980,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	.1850	.185	.18	.18	2,480,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	.0575	.0575	.0575	.0575	200,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.30	1.3	1.24	1.28	5,184,000
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	23.50	24	23.5	24	511,100
Global Equities Inc.	.3800	.38	.35	.36	1,150,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	.3200	.32	.32	.32	20,000
Ionics Inc.	15.00	15.25	15	15	102,700
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.65	2.65	2.5	2.6	916,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.30	2.3	2.26	2.26	65,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. "A"	.0180	.018	.018	.018	500,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.00	1	.94	.96	10,630,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	.4600	.47	.46	.47	150,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	.7000	.7	.65	.66	5,560,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	2.00	2	2	2	10,000
Solid Group Inc.	.8000	.81	.71	.72	3,130,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	5.00	5	5	5	10,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	.4100	.43	.4	.41	9,040,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	.4400	.44	.37	.4	7,010,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
A Brown Company Inc.	.7000	.7	.67	.67	150,000
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	10,000
Interphil Labs Inc. "A"	.7500	.75	.72	.72	25,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	6.40	6.4	6.4	6.4	3,000
Music Corp.	3.40	3.4	3.2	3.3	220,000
Picop Resources Inc.	.1500	.15	.14	.145	2,030,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	10.00	10.75	10	10.75	220,700
Steniel Manufacturing	.6000	.6	.6	.6	40,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	.7800	.78	.73	.73	7,700,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	.8100	.81	.68	.72	16,130,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	.6200	.62	.58	.6	4,320,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	.4000	.4	.4	.4	620,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	48.50	48.5	48	48.5	553,800
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	535.0	535	535	535	100
Equitable PCI Bank-War	3.70	3.7	3.35	3.35	190,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (PDR)	765.0	770	765	770	400
Omico Corp. Warrant	.0038	.0038	.0034	.0034	441,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	11.00	11	11	11	800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series U	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	11.00	11	10.25	10.25	1,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,200
Waterfront Phils.-Warrant	.1500	.15	.09	.11	2,140,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.90	6.9	6.7	6.7	21,039,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	.4300	.45	.4	.4	1,010,000
C & P Homes Inc.	.3700	.38	.34	.35	25,460,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	.5400	.55	.52	.52	1,750,000
Empire East Land Inc.	.4900	.49	.46	.48	16,840,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.80	2.85	2.65	2.75	33,380,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	.0500	.05	.05	.05	900,000
Gotesco Land Inc. "B"	.0500	.05	.05	.05	1,200,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	.2100	.21	.21	.21	30,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	.5200	.52	.48	.48	1,200,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	.4600	.46	.4	.4	680,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	.1550	.185	.15	.185	1,330,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.10	2.1	2.1	2.1	201,000
SM Development Corp.	.9200	.92	.9	.9	40,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.80	6.8	6.7	6.7	3,556,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	.1250	.135	.125	.135	1,560,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc.	.4500	.45	.45	.45	220,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	.0080	.008	.007	.007	51,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	.0075	.0075	.0075	.0075	14,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.90	4.5	2.9	4.5	45,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines "A"	.0210	.021	.019	.019	9,000,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines "B"	.0210	.021	.02	.02	3,700,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. "B"	.2300	.23	.23	.23	20,000
Manila Mining Corp. "A"	.0070	.007	.007	.007	10,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. "B"	.0070	.007	.007	.007	5,000,000
Omico Corp.	.0055	.0055	.005	.005	333,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	.0220	.022	.021	.021	10,800,000
Philex Mining Corp. "A"	.2200	.22	.22	.22	30,000
Philex Mining Corp. "B"	.2400	.24	.24	.24	350,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	.2100	.21	.2	.2	320,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	.0350	.035	.03	.031	18,100,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. "A"	.0055	.0055	.0055	.0055	43,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. "B"	.0055	.0055	.0055	.0055	31,000,000
Pacifica	.0210	.021	.019	.019	41,900,000
Sinophil Corp.	.1200	.12	.12	.12	20,000
Vulcan Ind'l.	.3000	.3	.29	.29	100,000

CURRENCIES

Jan. 30, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.089443	1.000000	49.6760
Japan	Yen	0.009335	0.008569	0.4257
United Kingdom	Pound	1.589716	1.459200	72.4872
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.139680	0.128212	6.3691
Switzerland	Franc	0.657797	0.603792	29.9940
Canada	Dollar	0.725812	0.666223	33.0953
Singapore	Dollar	0.623787	0.572574	28.4432
Australia	Dollar	0.592992	0.544307	27.0390
Bahrain	Dinar	2.889924	2.652661	131.7736
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.290526	0.266674	13.2473
Brunei	Dollar	0.621226	0.570223	28.3264
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000115	0.000106	0.0053
Thailand	Baht	0.025574	0.023474	1.1661
UAE	Dirham	0.296649	0.272294	13.5265
Korea	Won	0.000862	0.000791	0.0393
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.917900	45.5976
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.469315	23.3137
France	Franc	0.152450	0.139933	6.9513
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.416525	20.6913
Austria	Schilling	0.072672	0.066706	3.3137
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.022754	1.1303
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000474	0.0235
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.154380	7.6690
Portugal	Escudo	0.004987	0.004578	0.2274
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005517	0.2741
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.022754	1.1303
Ireland	Punt	1.269739	1.165493	57.8970

Stocks end down

(From page B1)

or 2.33 percent, in two days.

Last week, the index soared 17.6 percent week-on-week after the removal of former President Estrada from office.

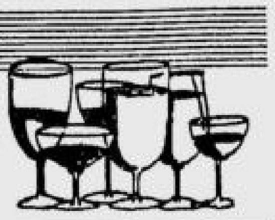
"The short-term players are cashing out. They probably realized that they are sitting on a lot of gains on a lot of stocks and the foreign funds that are coming in are really minimal and selective," said Edison Yap, fund manager at Equitable-PCI Trust.

Traders said the market was likely to stay in a consolidation mode for the rest of the week.

"The up-moves last week have been exaggerated, people are staying on the sidelines to see how much more the market can correct until it finds a level of support," said Juanis Barredo, vice president for sales at Citisecurities Inc. *Reuters*

Romulo's choice

COCKTALES



By Victor C. Agustin

LAWYER Ricardo Romulo yesterday resigned his chairmanship and directorship of Equitable PCI Bank, saying he did not want to put the bank into a potential conflict-of-interest situation with the current administration.

With Romulo's resignation, Peter Go Pailan, who had been pulled out of semi-retirement since the bank was embroiled in a series of Estrada-related scandals, has reassumed chairmanship of the bank.

Romulo, who is chair of the Makati Business Club as well as managing partner of the Romulo Mabanta Buenaventura Sayoc & De Los Angeles Law Offices, happens to be a first cousin of the newly designated finance secretary, Alberto Romulo.

As head of the finance department, cousin Alberto also has direct supervision of the Social Security System and Government Service Insurance System, both major shareholders of Equitable PCI Bank.

In addition, Romulo's law partner, Jose Buenaventura, happens to be a brother of Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

Romulo had been with Equitable Bank for 25 years, inheriting the shares and the bank vice chairmanship from his late father, Foreign Secretary Carlos P. Romulo.

Family problems

INSTEAD of bringing down interest rates in line with the downward T-bill trend, BPI Family Bank is ironically pushing this year's interest charges on housing loans to 19 percent from last year's 13 percent.

Those particularly penalized are clients who originally obtained their housing loans from Far East Bank, which has been taken over by the Bank of Philippine Islands.

One particular homeowner got so incensed when she received a phone call from BPI Family Bank the other day notifying her of the 6-percent jump in monthly amortization—to think that the loan is denominated in (devalued) pesos, not US dollars—that she wanted to continue People Power II right at the bank doorsteps.

Unbeatable Binay

THE PLANNED lunch hosted by a group of Makati matrons who want to convince former Economic Planning Secretary Solita Monsod to run for Makati mayor is not pushing through.

Reason? Monsod herself is not keen on the mayoral prospects and definitely not about to wreck her putative political career against the formidable machinery of comebacking Jejomar Binay.

Ayala matriarch Bea Zobel said she admired Monsod but denied, in the strongest terms, leading a campaign against Binay.

Absentee suspect

JAIME Dichaves lawyer Manuel Lazaro denied having been present in the controversial Dec. 13 meeting in the office of Erap counsel Estelito Mendoza, where then Equitable PCI Bank chair George Go, Erap lawyer Fernando Chua and Dichaves attempted to create a new set of Jose Velarde documents.

Lazaro said he was at the Batasang Pambansa the whole morning up to past 2 p.m. on that day, attending the Urban Bank hearings representing the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

After the hearings, Lazaro said he motored back to his Salcedo Village office, where he hosted two meetings, one of whom, a board meeting of the Cavite Eco Development Corp., was even attended "by priests (and) nuns..."

Lazaro added that Dichaves, who has fled the country after President Estrada was deposed, became a client only on Dec. 18.

The other mysterious man in the meeting, San Miguel vice chair Ramon Ang, has chosen to keep quiet about his alleged participation in the cover-up attempt.

Short takes

- THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas will mark its 390th foundation day on Friday with the usual Mass and a "street" party to also celebrate People Power II. A select few alumni in government service have been invited.

Sen. Francisco Tatad, who is considered a Thomasian despite being a "kickout," and former law dean Chief Justice Andres Narvasa are definitely not among the invitees, according to an event organizer.

- BECAUSE of the peaceful resolution of the political crisis, the New York-based SaveSight Mission has decided to proceed with their Philippine trip.

Led by doctors from Columbia University and Columbia-Presbyterian, SaveSight Mission will perform charity eye operations for indigent patients of Rizal and Bulacan starting next week.

The US mission is led by Dr. Antonio Gonzales and is assisted by the UST Hospital's ophthalmology department, headed by Dr. Jacinto Bautista.

Heard through the grapevine

FORMER Transportation and Communications Undersecretary Josefina Lichauco is slated for an ambassadorial posting in Europe, most likely Italy.

And former Comelec Chair Haydee Yorac is next in line for the Ombudsman, if the wish of Erap-comelately Rene Saguisag that the current occupant finally get a grip of his senses and do the honorable thing is granted.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

With financing secured, toll rehab to start in July

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

THE LOPEZ group's Manila North Tollways Corp. has finally secured a financing package from multilateral lenders, allowing the much-delayed expansion and rehabilitation of the North Luzon Expressway to begin in July this year.

Manila North Tollways president and chief executive Jose "Ping" de Jesus said the company had finalized the terms of the financing package with five international lenders led by the Asian Development Bank and International Finance Corp. These institutions would each extend $45 million.

The rest of the lenders were Export Finance and Insurance Corp. of Australia, which offered to lend $55 million; Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, $52.5215 million; and Coface (Compagnie Francaise d'Assurance pour le commerce Exterieur), $55 million.

De Jesus said with the financing package, the company could proceed with the expansion and rehabilitation of the expressway, which would cover a total of 84 kilometers.

The project involves the construction and rehabilitation of 14 interchanges, 24 bridges and 31 overpasses from the Balintawak to the Sta. Ines tollways, which will connect Manila with the Clark special economic zone in Pampanga. It will provide an interconnection to the Subic Freeport zone through an 8.8-kilometer expressway built in 1996.

The project, which will be handled by Leighton Holdings Ltd. of Australia, is expected to be finished within three years.

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ALABANG "A" (Buying)	1,500,000	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	490,000
ALABANG "B" (Buying	1,650,000	MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	840,000
BAGUIO CC	750,000	Q.C. SPORTS "A" (Buying)	210,000
CC AT TAGAYTAY	500,000	RIVIERA "A" (Buying)	250,000
EAGLERIDGE "A" (Buying)	330,000	TAG MIDLANDS	925,000
MANILA GOLF CORP (Buying)	16,000,000	TAG H'LANDS GOLF (Buying)	1,000,000
MANILA POLO (Buying)	2,600,000	VALLE VERDE (Buying)	160,000

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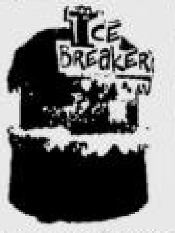

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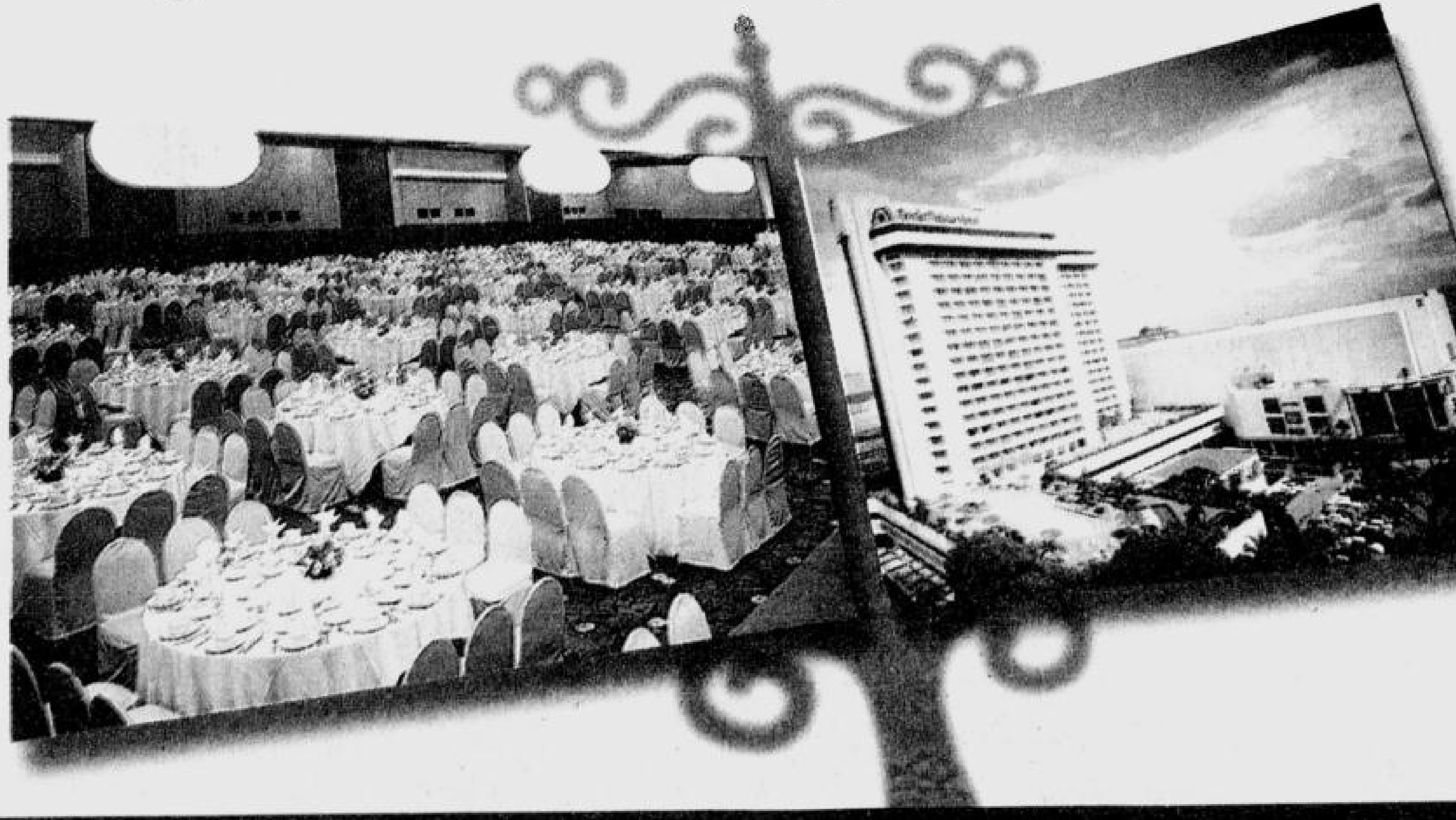

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Dr. Gregorio A. Moral, Jr.

Agosto 3, 1926 - Disyembre 29, 2000
Ama at Asawang Mapagmahal, Mapagkalingang Manggagamot at Guro,
Alagad ng Sining, Tapat na Kawal ng Simbahan at Pamahalaan
Gawad Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice

Taos-pusong nagpapasalamat ang kaniyang maybahay, **Rustica N. Lopez**
Mga anak: **Patrick Gerard, Maria Antonia** at **Allen Valencia, Paolo, Joseph**
Mga apo: **Martha Francesca** at **Miguel Antonio**
Mga kapatid: **Violeta** at **Arturo**
Mga bayaw at hipag: **Patrocinio, Rebecca, Clarita**
Remedios at **Roberto, Maria, Jose** at **Milagros, Justita**
Amado at **Aida, Matea, Rosario, Rosie**
sa lahat ng nakiramay sa mga angkan ng **Moral** at **Lopez**.

Ang mga abuloy na inilaan ninyo para sa Special Aid Grant for Indigent Patients (SAGIP) ay malayo ang mararating sa pagtulong sa mga may karamdamang nangangailangan. Inaasahan naming ang inyong patuloy na pag-aambag sa serbisyong ito na itinatag ng yumao.

Inaanyayahan kayo sa Pebrero 6, 2001 na siyang ika-40 araw ng kaniyang pagpanaw sa tahanan ng mga Moral sa Calaca, Batangas para sa padasal at pananghalian.

Patuloy nating ipagdasal ang ikapapayapa ng kaniyang kaluluwa.

Mga Handog na Misa - Pebrero 6, 2001.

Parokya ni San Raphael Arkanghel	— Calaca	5:30 a.m.
Kapilya ng Pagkabuhay	— UST Clinical Division	6:30 a.m.
Kapilya ng Pribadong Ospital ng UST	— UST Private Hospital	12:15 p.m.
Santuario de San Jose	— East Greenhills	6:15 p.m.
Parokya ng Birhen Loreto	— Sampaloc	6:00 a.m.
Basilika ng Poong Nazareno	— Quiapo	6:00 a.m.
National Shrine ng Santo Domingo	— Quezon City	6:30 a.m.
Parokya ng Birhen ng Lourdes	— Quezon City	7:30 a.m.
Parokya ng San Jose Manggagawa	— Balintawak, Q.C.	6:00 p.m.
Shrine ni San Antonio	— Sampaloc	6:15 p.m.
Shrine ng Imakulada Concepcion	— Naic, Cavite	6:30 a.m.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

SERAFIN H. TAN

Of Manila City

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on January 26, 2001 at the age of 65.

His bereaved wife **ANITA**; children **ALEXANDER** and **JESSIE, SHARON** and **TEDDY, ANDREW, SIMONET** and **ARTURO JOSE**; grandchildren and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapel, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, February 4, 2001, 9:00 a.m. at the Chinese Crematorium, Manila City.

So lovingly remembered
on the 14th Death Anniversary of

RUFINO R. SANTOS, JR.

Who passed away on January 31, 1987

Holy Masses will be offered at the following churches:

St. Andrew the Apostle Parish Bel-Air, Makati City	6:30 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.
St. Roque Parish Pateros, Metro Manila	6:00 a.m.
San Pedro Parish San Pedro, Laguna	6:00 a.m.
St. John Bosco Parish Arnaiz Street, Makati City	7:30 a.m.
Santuario de San Antonio Parish Forbes Park, Makati City	12:15 p.m.
National Shrine of the Sacred Heart Dao, San Antonio Village, Makati City	6:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.
Holy Rosary Cathedral Vancouver, B.C. Canada	12:10 p.m.

His wife **Aurora**; and children **Ronald** and **Cherry, Roy, Rico** and **Jenny**; grandson **Rufino Vincent** request relatives and friends to pray for eternal repose of his soul.

We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death. He will raise us to life with Jesus. He will present us along with you, to God.
2 Corinthian 4:14

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

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CONRADO "DADONG" YUZON SIMON

Of Guagua, Pampanga

Now peacefully rests in the Infinite Grace of the Lord
this 29th of January, 2001 at the age of 90.

His loving wife **NENA**; children **PITO** and **CHIT SIMON, BETH** and **ROBERT LOPEZ, TITA** and **OSCAR HIPOLITO, MARILOU** and **WILLIE LIM**; grandchildren **JAEGY**; **MYRO** and **JINJIN, ROBBY** and **TISHA**; **MAITA, PAOLO** and **ANNICA**; **BENJY** and **VINCENT**; great grandchildren **KAT, TRISTAN** and **JAVIER** request for your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His mortal remains lie in state at the Santuario de San Jose, Greenhills, San Juan.

Interment will be on Friday, 2nd of February, 2001 at the Holy Cross Memorial Park after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

CESARIO C. ALARILLA SR.

of Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija

Peacefully joined his Creator
on January 28, 2001
at the age of 69.

His beloved wife **TERESITA PADILLA**; children and their spouses **CECIL** and **ARTMAR, CARLOS, JUN** and **AIDA, CONSUELO, STELLA** and **ELGIE, DING** and **MERCY**, and **KIMAR** and **CLAIRE**; grandchildren **TELTEL, CHINCHIN, JJ, JC BOY, JUNJUN, JOPHER, ARGIE, RASTEL, ELISE, MAEMAE, FRANCIS** and **JONJON**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence at Rizal Street, Poblacion, Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija.

Interment will be on February 3, 2001 after the 2:30 PM Mass.

Our Dearly Beloved "Mommy"

ROSARIO HERNANDEZ DELOS SANTOS

Peacefully joined with the Lord on January 23, 2001
at the age of 76.

She left behind her loving husband **Almario**; children **Efren** and **Bernie**, **Lino** and **Maris, Ray** and **Thelma, Rita** and **Dody, Edith** and **George**, and **Maria** and **Winston**; grandchildren **Angela** (†), **Abby, Inna, Anna, Alvin, Paulo, Gabe, Melissa, Alea, Eric, Karla, Nikko, Zeke, Miggy, Fiel, Alexa, Wesley & Jayden.**

Her remains lie in state at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Shrine, Doña J. Rodriguez Ave., Broadway, New Manila, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, February 4, 2001 at the Loyola Memorial Park Marikina after the 1:00 P.M. Mass.

LT. COL. MANUEL L. CAJIGAS, Ph D (NDCP, CLASS 11 '76)

Past. Asst. Regional Director, DECS Region X, III, II
"Soldier, Educator, Family Man"
Born: May 6, 1927 (Dumaguete City)
Died: January 29, 2001 (Bacood Sta. Mesa)

His loving wife **SALUD**; children **MALOU & KARL KOCH, CRISTABEL & VICTOR DE JESUS, ALMACITA & RIC LOPEZ, MANNY & TINA CAJIGAS, MODETTE & DONDIE LUNA**; grandchildren, and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, February 3, 2001, at Evergreen Memorial Park, San Miguel, Pasig City after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at Fatima Church, Bacood, Sta. Mesa.

✝

JOSEPH "JOEY" ABRINA SARMIENTO

OF QUEZON CITY AND LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
ON JANUARY 24, 2001 AT THE AGE OF 44.

His loving parents **Octavio** and **Nora Sarmiento**; brothers and sisters **Rita, Edwin** and **Nina Silang, Marvin** and **Anne Abesamis, Sr. Mary Jean** of the Child Jesus, **Raymund** and **Anna, Deanne, Richard**; nieces and nephews **Nicole, Therese, Nadine, Catherine, Andrew, Anton**; uncles and aunts, cousins and friends mourn his passing and request the pious readers to offer prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains will lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, on February 24, 2001.

Cremation will be on Sunday, February 4, at La Funeraria Paz Crematory, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

We announce with deep sorrow,
the demise of

TAY CHAY HAN

(Delfin Tay)

who joined his Creator
on January 30, 2001

He is survived by wife **Dorothy**

Children

**Johnny and Luz, Chato and Mickey, Lorenzo and Jean,
Richard, Suzette, Michelle and Peter**

Grandchildren

Anna Liza, Johnina, Joey and Jonah

Great Grandchild

Hannah Estrella

Brothers and Sisters

**Auring, Rudy and Sally, Rey and Evelyn, Angie
Leopoldo and Carmen, Nene and Tony Alvarez**

His remains lie in state at the Immaculate Heart Chapel
of the National Shrine of the Sacred Heart,
No. 4 Dao Street, Makati City (across YMCA).

Interment will be on Friday, February 2, 2001
at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque City
after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

Message of Thanks

We, The Family of the late

Atty. Proculo "Boy" Fuentes, Jr.

*who passed away in the Grace of the Lord
on January 20, 2001.*

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and Prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and who in countless ways, condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

---

*Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,...
For my eyes have seen your salvation.*

Luke 2:29-30

CONCEPCION FONACIER-ABAÑO

of Limay, Bataan and Daet, Camarines Norte

Widow of the late **Dr. Jose R. Abaño, Sr.**

*Now peacefully rests in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord
on January 30, 2001 at the age of 83.*

Her bereaved children **Ophie** and **Emil Tamayo**, **Dr. Joey** and **Mabel Galan**, **Atty. Bebot** and **Jean Villareal**, **Bing** and **Myrna Avecilla**, and **Charito de Paz**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, brothers, sisters, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Sta. Rita Church Mortuary Chapel, Philam Homes, Quezon City until Thursday and will be transferred to Daet, Camarines Norte in the early morning of Friday.

Interment will be on Sunday, February 4, 2:00 p.m. at the Family Mausoleum, Roman Catholic Cemetery in Daet.

**I am
the way,
the truth
and
the life.
No one
comes
to the
Father
except
through
Me.**

John 14:6

Our Dearly Beloved

EMILIANO "EMIL" T. RAMIREZ

of Balayan, Batangas

*Peacefully joined our Lord on January 30, 2001
at the age of 71.*

His loving wife **Rosario-Rustia**; children **Ramon** and **Beth**, **Gerry**, **Cory** and **Franklin**; grandchildren **Franco**, **Dennis** and **Stephanie**, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at St. Therese Chapel, Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, along Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on February 3, 2001 after the 3:00 p.m. Mass at Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

ANITA CHEONG PONCE

February 6, 1927 - January 29, 2001

Survived by her husband **Federico**; children **Andy** and **Anne**, **Gay** and **Rex**; sister **Lydia**; brother-in-law **Col. Ven Tapia**; grandchildren **Christopher**, **Kevin** and **Kenneth**; nephews and nieces, and other relatives.

Her remains lie in state at the St. Peter Memorial Chapels (Chapel D) Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Schedule of funeral Mass and cremation services to be announced later. For further details, please contact Tel. Nos. 410-92-86, 410-92-87.

**THE REDEMPTORISTS
OF THE PROVINCE OF CEBU**

Deeply mourn the demise of

FR. LUIS "LOUIE" G. HECHANOVA, C.Ss.R.

**(Provincial Superior of the Redemptorists in
the Visayas and Mindanao)**

who died on January 25, 2001 at the age of 61.

His remains now lie in state
at the Redemptorists Church, Cebu City.

His remains will be transferred to St. Clement's Church (Redemptorists), La Paz, Iloilo City on Wednesday afternoon, January 31, 2001.

Funeral Mass will be held on Saturday, February 3, 2001 at 9:00 AM. Interment follows at the Iloilo Memorial Park.

The faithful are requested to pray for the repose of his soul.

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In Loving Memory

On the 16th Death Anniversary of

HONORIO POBLADOR, JR.

February 1, 2001

Holy Masses will be offered in his memory on February 1, 2001 at the following churches:

SACRED HEART PARISH	Welfareville, City of Mandaluyong	6:00 a.m.
MARY THE QUEEN PARISH	Little Baguio, San Juan, Metro Manila	6:00 a.m
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE	Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila	7:15 a.m.
SAN MIGUEL PRO-CATHEDRAL	Gen. Solano, San Miguel, Manila	7:00 a.m.
OUR LADY OF SORROWS PARISH	F.B. Harrison Street, Pasay City	7:00 a.m.
SAN FELIPE NERI PARISH	City of Mandaluyong	6:00 a.m.
DON BOSCO MAKATI	Pasay Road, City of Makati	6:00 p.m.
SAINT ANDREW PARISH	Bel-Air, City of Makati	6:30 p.m.
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO	Forbes Park, City of Makati	6:00 p.m.
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGUORI CHURCH	Magallanes Village, City of Makati	6:00 p.m.
ST. SEBASTIAN CATHEDRAL	Bacolod City	7:00 a.m.
SACRED HEART SHRINE	Bacolod City	6:00 a.m.
SAN ANTONIO PARISH	Bacolod City	7:00 a.m.

His family requests relatives, friends and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

DR. FORTUNATO VILLARAMA CORREA, SR.

of Angat, Bulacan

*Died in the Peace of our Lord on January 24, 2001
in Toronto, Ontario, Canada at the age of 72.*

He is survived by his loving wife **LORY**; and children **MARIVIC** and **PING RAYOS**, **MARISSA** and **BEBOT BADILLO**, **MALOU** and **FRANCIS ANTONIO**, **BOY** and **BEL**, **ROD** and **SOL**, **BOB**, and **MARICAR** and **PATRICK DAVID**; grandchildren, sisters **DELY** and **GORING**; and their spouses.

His remains lie in state at Nacional Memorial Homes, Chapel 2-B, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will take place on Saturday, February 3 at Himlayan ng Lahi Memorial Park, Angat, Bulacan.

EX-MAYOR ANGILEO P. PAUIG

of Enrile, Cagayan

*Peacefully joined his Creator on Sunday, January 28, 2001
at the age of 97.*

His loving wife **Adoracion** (†); children **Lourdes**, **Jonas** and **Dulce**, **Elena**, **Angeleo, Jr.** (†) and **Norma**, **Wilhelmina** and **Pascual** (†), **Nicolas** and **Paula**, **Ex-Mayor Domingo** and **Vilma**; grandchildren, great-grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at his residence at No. 7 Pauig Street, Centro, Enrile, Cagayan. Interment will be on Saturday, February 3, 2001 at Enrile, Cagayan.

---

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PAPM
PHILIPPINE ASSOCIATION OF PAINT MANUFACTURERS

PHILIPPINE ASSOCIATION OF PAINT MANUFACTURERS, INC.

40 years

Spearheading the Industry with Unified Strength For Global Competitiveness

MESSAGES

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives

Warmest Felicitations to all the officers and members of the Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers (PAPM) on the Association's 40th anniversary and congratulations to the incoming officers and Board of Directors on your induction to office.

As a past director, I am honored to have participated in the group's efforts in promoting and strengthening global competitiveness not only of its members, but of the industry, as well. It is an affirmation of the Association's vision of "Spearheading the Industry with Unified Strength Towards Global Competitiveness", first crystallized almost a decade ago, that this has now become very relevant in the light of the current worldwide trend towards globalization.

Best wishes for a most successful celebration and mabuhay ang PAPM.

JESLI A. LAPUZ
Representative
3rd District, Tarlac

My heartfelt congratulations to the Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers on the occasion of its 40th anniversary, and to the incoming officers and directors who are to be inducted today.

The PAPM is close to my heart, having been a part of the industry for 16 years and a President of the organization in 1965.

In this historic time, I wish you all much success and hope that you will do your share in the healing and rebuilding of our beloved nation.

DR. FELIX K. MARAMBA, JR.
Inducting Officer

The Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers, Inc. (PAPM) today celebrate its 40th anniversary. Today, we witness another PAPM milestone and celebrate the momentous occasion. It is most fit to recognize the people who were instrumental in leading and keeping the association unified and strong over the past 40 years.

I am deeply honored to lead PAPM for the second year and together with the Officers and Board of Directors, allow me to convey our deepest gratitude to our members and friends for the unending support of the association.

ALBERT LEE
President

The new millennium ushers in a new and revitalized era in the paint industry as member companies become more active and visibly participate in the industry's bid for global competitiveness.

It therefore becomes imperative that a continuing education and training program again be undertaken by member companies. Technical seminars were conducted on topics such as Comprehensive Study on Pigments, Paint Technology Course (PTC) for Technical and non-Technical Personnel, Advance Coating Course on Design and Analysis of Experiences; Breathable Coating and Rheology and Matting agent/ fumed silicon, colorant and biocides. Seminars however will not only be confined to technical aspects but also in areas of Sales & Marketing, Operations, Finance, Human Resource and Research and Development.

Series of symposia provide venues for dialogue and discussion on how to address problems besetting the industry and suggest appropriate measures for its solution. The recently concluded "Post Asian Crisis" which focused on the Philippine economy 2000 tackled assistance and self-help programs in the light of the financial crisis which is besetting the country at the moment.

Despite the difficult situation, the PAPM extended assistance to the Habitat Housing Project by way of paint, paint cans, labor and cash donations.

The association took center stage when it hosted the 6th Asian Paint Industry Council (APIC) Millenium Conference last November 2000. The importance of this conference cannot be over-emphasized for here, the leaders of 16 Asia-Pacific National Paint Associations met and discussed policies on issues involving industry guidelines, government relations, product testings and classifications, environmental concerns and trade practices.

Finally, PAPM has released the first PAPM Fact Book 2000 in its bid to attract more members. A full appreciation of the paint industry and the role of the association will open possible avenues for interaction with other business. Additional copies are still available to interested parties.

The association has trained its eyes on global competitiveness and believes that it is not far from achieving it.

The Philippine paint industry started as early as 1911 when a Spanish-owned factory tried to start commercial production of paint. However, it was forced to shut down due to shortage of raw materials and inability to compete with imported paints.

Some years later, lumbang oil, an oil from lumbang tree found in the island of Mindanao, was found and recognized to be a good raw material for the manufacture of paint. A few factories were established during the pre-war years and they were dependent on imported raw materials. The post war construction period triggered the rapid growth of the local paint industry in the 1960's. Foreign investments and joint ventures in the paint industry also started. By 1969, 18 paint companies were reported by the National Economic council. By 1978, local paint manufacturers grew to 75.

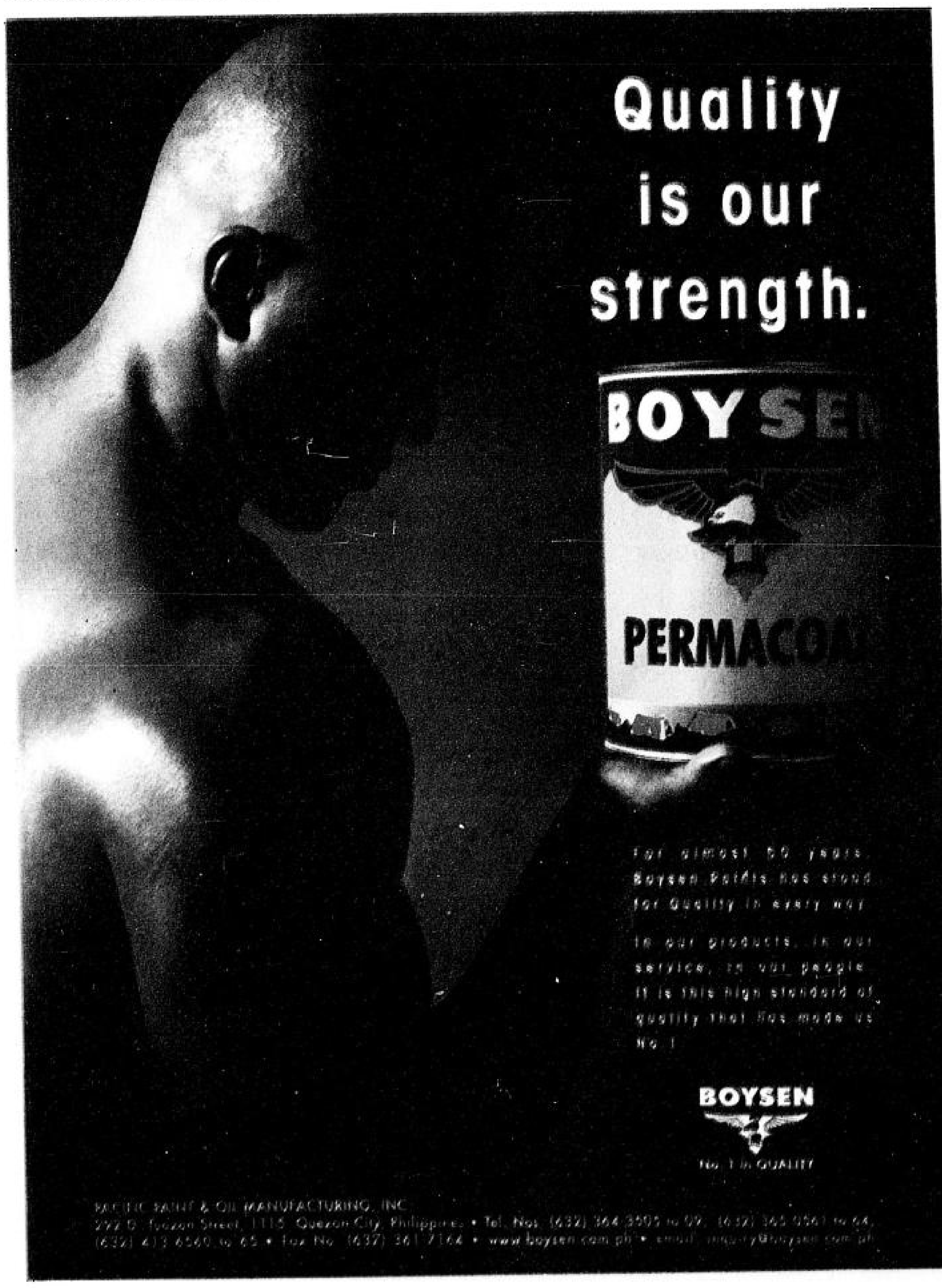
With the rapid increase in the number of firms engaged in the manufacture oil paint, a group of paint manufacturers saw the need to develop and provide practical and technical facts, data and standards, fundamentals to the manufacture and use of paints and related protective coatings.

The Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers or PAPM was created in 1961 by a group of men and women with the general aim of professionalizing the paint manufacturing industry. PAPM is a privately operated non-stock, non-profit, non-sectarian and non-political organization to serve as a venue to seek government assistance and support.

Since its beginning, the PAPM has evolved from being a social organization to a group that concerns itself primarily with the welfare of the industry. More than that, it has become a venue for the education of its more than 60 member companies which have also proven their competence by surviving and prospering through the most difficult years.

Membership in the PAPM is open to all individuals, corporations, partnerships and associations who are engaged in business or activities related to the manufacture of paints in the Philippines.

As of August 2000, there are 72 member companies, 26 of which are regular members those primarily engaged in the manufacture of paints, lacquer, varnishes and other related protective coatings), 23 local suppliers (those who are primarily engaged in rendering services, supply, distribution of raw materials used in or connected with the manufacture and packaging of paints and related protective coatings) and 23 Indent suppliers (those primarily engaged in indenting of materials used in the manufacture and packaging of paints/related protective coatings.)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PACIFIC PAINT & OIL MANUFACTURING, INC.

6th ASIAN PAINT INDUSTRY COUNCIL MEETING
MANILA PHILIPPINES
EASTMAN
BASF

The Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers hosted the 6th Asian Paint Industry Council (APIC) Meeting held last November 14 to 17 at the Shangrila Hotel. The convention was attended by members of the various paint associations from Asian countries which include China, India, Indonesida, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Thailand. The meeting was chaired by Albert Lee, PAPM President 2000 and Co-Chaired by Atty. Arthur Yap,PAPM President 1998-1999.

Congratulations to PAPM on its 40th Anniversary!

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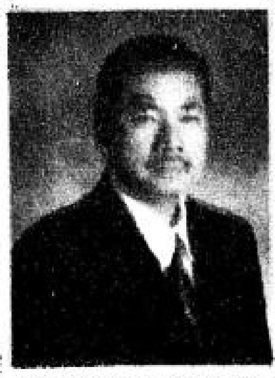

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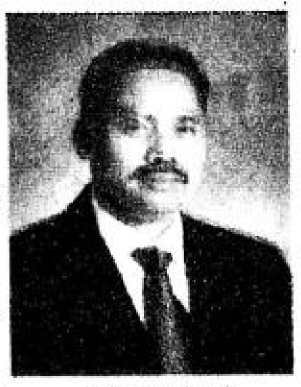

JUN RIEGO
Director
Co-Chairman, Sports Committee
Tradeon Corporation

PAPM PAST PRESIDENTS

Keeping the Tradition of Quality for Global

Photo above taken during the recent reunion of past presidents. Seated from left: Remigio A. Santos, Francisco I. Ferrer, Felix K. Maramba, Jr., Enrique B. Lagdameo, Cesar L. Afable, Nacreonte T. Figueroa. Standing: Arthur C. Yap, Alejo M. Dumrique, Paul Y. Ung, Albert T. Lee, Francisco K. Sanz and Eriberto D. Pineda. Not in photo is Leo A. Salson.

1961	Merrick Banks	H.G. Henares & Sons, Inc.
1962	Merrick Banks	H.G. Henares & Sons, Inc.
1963	Neal R. Barnard	Fuller O'Brien Paints Co., Inc.
1964	Vicenter Icasiano	Elizalde Paint, Inc.
1965	Vicente E. Hitt	Sherwin Williams Phils.
1966	Felix K. Maramba, Jr.	H.G. Henares & Sons, Inc.
1967	Enrique B.Lagdameo	General Paint Corporation (Phils.) Inc.
1968	Carlos T. Añelle	Elizalde Paint, Inc.
1969	Marcelino P. Garcia	London Paint & Varnish Co., Inc.
1970	Cesar Afable	Associated Paint, Inc.
1971	Enrique B. Lagdameo	General Paint Corporation (Phils.) Inc.
1972	Antonio C. Villanueva	Pacific Products, Inc.
1973	Brian O'Connor	Sinclair Phils., Inc.
1974	Eriberto D. Pineda	Fuller O'Brien Paints Co., Inc.
1975	Emilio Beltran	Fuller O'Brien Paints Co., Inc.
1976	Perfecto Prado	Sherwin Williams Phils.
1977	Aquilino De Guzman	Dutch Boy Phils., Inc.
1978	Nacreonte T. Figueroa	Fuller O'Brien Paints Co., Inc.
1981	Francisco I. Ferrer	Dutch Boy Phils., Inc.
1982	Cornelio B. Reformina	Sherwin Williams Phils.
1983	Cornelio B. Reformina	Sherwin Williams Phils.
1984	Virgilio E. Zulueta	Pacific Products, Inc.
1985	Remigio A. Santos	Dutch Boy Phils., Inc.
1986	Remigio A. Santos	Dutch Boy Phils., Inc.
1987	Francisco K. Sanz	Cord Chemicals, Inc.
1988	Francisco K. Sanz	Cord Chemicals, Inc.
1989	Eriberto D. Pineda	Fuller O'Brien Paints Co., Inc.
1990	David D. Boney	Dutch Boy Phils., Inc.
1991	David D. Boney	Dutch Boy Phils., Inc.
1992	Paul Y. Ung	Pacific Paint & Oil Mfg. Inc.
1993	Paul Y. Ung	Pacific Paint & Oil Mfg. Inc.
1994	Leo A. Salson	Fuller O'Brien Paints Co., Inc.
1995	Jose Sy	Roosevelt Chemical, Inc.
1996	Jose Sy	Roosevelt Chemical, Inc.
1997	Alejo Dumrique	ADD Research Paints& Chemicals, Inc.
1998	Arthur Yap	H-Chem Industries, Inc.
1999	Arthur Yap	H-Chem Industries, Inc.
2000	Albert Lee	Charter Chemical & Coating Corporation

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One of PAPM's commitment is to help in the effort to provide affordable housing of various concerned sectors such as the Habitat for Humanity Philippines (HPHP) which hopes to build 3,547 units all over the country. The association donated paints and provided labor for houses built under the initial phase of the project lead by no less than former US president Jimmy Carter who was here to personally supervise the construction of the houses.

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we make our mark through product superiority.

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Chemrez, Inc.

DONALD MAGBAYAO
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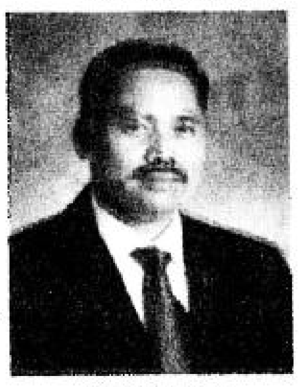

JUN RIEGO
Director
Co-Chairman, Sports Committee
Tradelon Corporation

OFFICERS & MEMBERS OF THE PHIL. ASS. OF PAINT MANUFACTURES INC.

One of PAPM's commitment is to help in the effort to provide affordable housing of various concerned sectors such as the Habitat for Humanity Philippines (HPHP) which hopes to build 3,547 units all over the country. The association donated paints and provided labor for houses built under the initial phase of the project lead by no less than former US president Jimmy Carter who was here to personally supervise the construction of the houses.

PAPM PAST PRESIDENTS

Keeping the Tradition of Quality for Global

Photo above taken during the recent reunion of past presidents. Seated from left: Remigio A. Santos, Francisco I. Ferrer, Felix K. Maramba, Jr., Enrique B. Lagdameo, Cesar L. Afable, Nacreonte T. Figueroa. Standing: Arthur C. Yap, Alejo M. Dumrique, Paul Y. Ung, Albert T. Lee, Fancisco K. Sanz and Eriberto D. Pineda. Not in photo is Leo A. Salson.

1961	Merrick Banks	H.G. Henares & Sons, Inc.
1962	Merrick Banks	H.G. Henares & Sons, Inc.
1963	Neal R. Barnard	Fuller O'Brien Paints Co., Inc.
1964	Vicenter Icasiano	Elizalde Paint, Inc.
1965	Vicente E. Hitt	Sherwin Williams Phils.
1966	Felix K. Maramba, Jr.	H.G. Henares & Sons, Inc.
1967	Enrique B.Lagdameo	General Paint Corporation (Phils.) Inc.
1968	Carlos T. Añelle	Elizalde Paint, Inc.
1969	Marcelino P. Garcia	London Paint & Varnish Co., Inc.
1970	Cesar Afable	Associated Paint, Inc.
1971	Enrique B. Lagdameo	General Paint Corporation (Phils.) Inc.
1972	Antonio C. Villanueva	Pacific Products, Inc.
1973	Brian O'Connor	Sinclair Phils., Inc.
1974	Eriberto D. Pineda	Fuller O'Brien Paints Co., Inc.
1975	Emilio Beltran	Fuller O'Brien Paints Co., Inc.
1976	Perfecto Prado	Sherwin Williams Phils.
1977	Aquilino De Guzman	Dutch Boy Phils., Inc.
1978	Nacreonte T. Figueroa	Fuller O'Brien Paints Co., Inc.
1981	Francisco I. Ferrer	Dutch Boy Phils., Inc.
1982	Cornelio B. Reformina	Sherwin Williams Phils.
1983	Cornelio B. Reformina	Sherwin Williams Phils.
1984	Virgilio E. Zulueta	Pacific Products, Inc.
1985	Remigio A. Santos	Dutch Boy Phils., Inc.
1986	Remigio A. Santos	Dutch Boy Phils., Inc.
1987	Francisco K. Sanz	Cord Chemicals, Inc.
1988	Francisco K. Sanz	Cord Chemicals, Inc.
1989	Eriberto D. Pineda	Fuller O'Brien Paints Co., Inc.
1990	David D. Boney	Dutch Boy Phils., Inc.
1991	David D. Boney	Dutch Boy Phils., Inc.
1992	Paul Y. Ung	Pacific Paint & Oil Mfg. Inc.
1993	Paul Y. Ung	Pacific Paint & Oil Mfg. Inc.
1994	Leo A. Salson	Fuller O'Brien Paints Co., Inc.
1995	Jose Sy	Roosevelt Chemical, Inc.
1996	Jose Sy	Roosevelt Chemical, Inc.
1997	Alejo Dumrique	ADD Research Paints& Chemicals, Inc.
1998	Arthur Yap	H-Chem Industries, Inc.
1999	Arthur Yap	H-Chem Industries, Inc.
2000	Albert Lee	Charter Chemical & Coating Corporation

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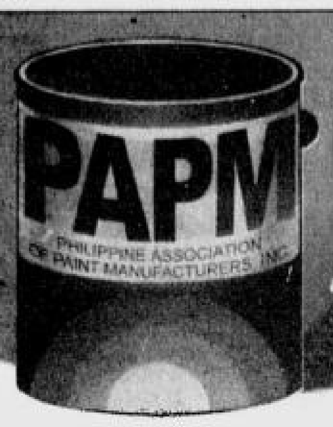
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OBJECTIVES

1. To cultivate healthy and profitable competition amongst manufacturing members.
2. To provide continuous exchange of technical assistance and services between the suppliers & manufacturing members for a progressive technology upliftment.
3. To explore potential business opportunities beneficial to the progress of the industry, and finally, to enhance the economic growth of the country.
4. To coordinate with the government for faster services in the approval of quality standards for the protection of the consumers.
5. To seek assistance from the government in the implementation of the business taxes and duties that become profitable and favorable to the industry.

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2001 PAPM PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

FEBRUARY
- Presentation of Action Plan

APRIL
- Export

JUNE
- Environmental Update

AUGUST
- Bingo Night

OCTOBER
- By Laws Amendments
- Moon Cake Festival

NOVEMBER
- Election Night

DECEMBER
- Christmas Party

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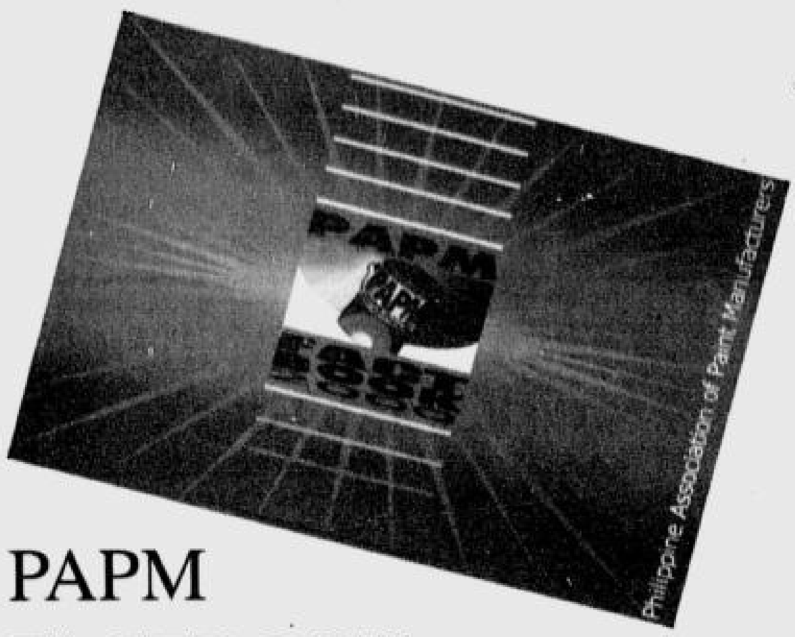

PAPM FACTBOOK

The first edition of the PAPM Factbook is now available to members suppliers and all interested parties who would like to avail of vital information regarding the paint industry. The fact book contains the profile and list of products of PAPM member companies, local and indent suppliers.

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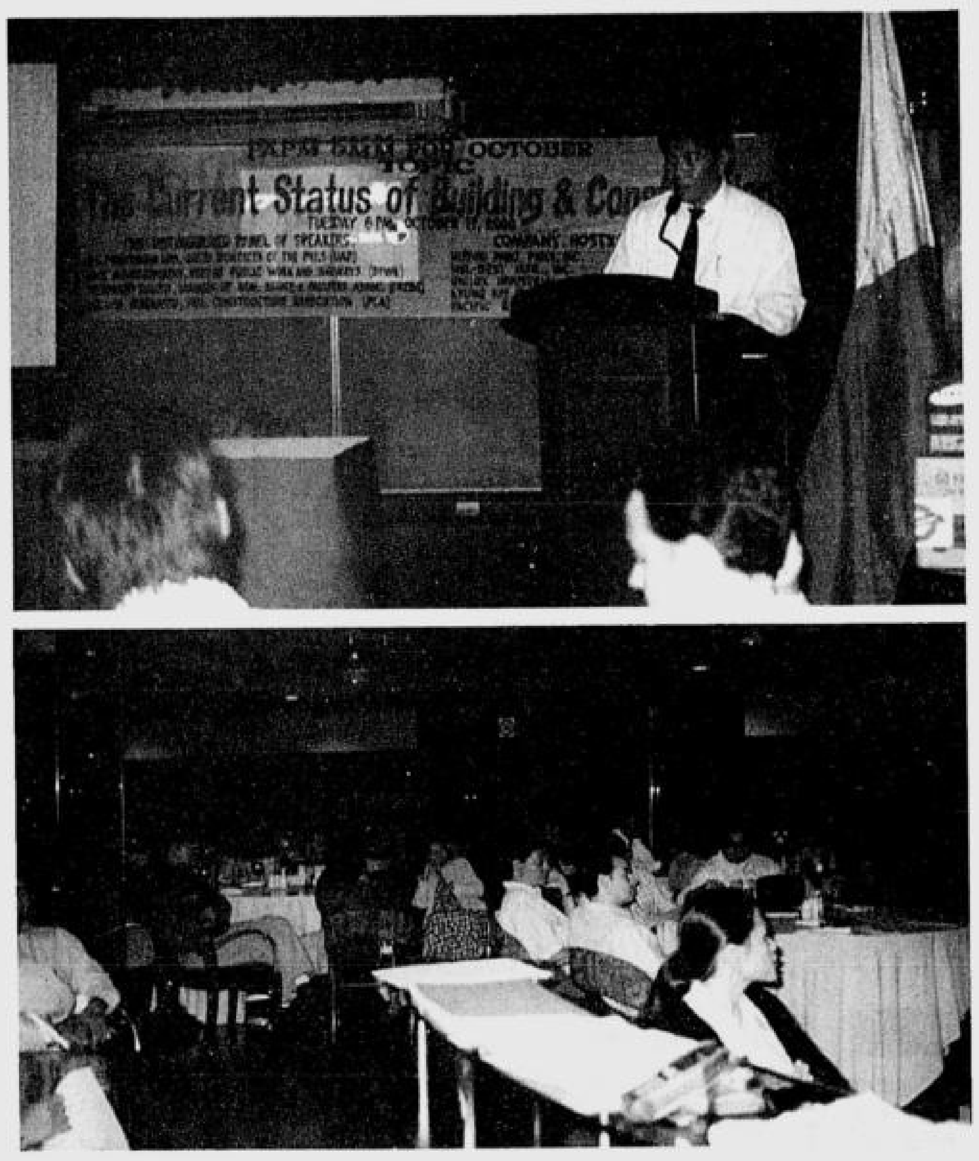

President Albert Lee welcomes participants to one of a series of seminars being conducted by the Association in its bid to update and upgrade personnel not only on technical aspects but also on management, sales and finance as it trains its eyes on global competitiveness.

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A career that is a calling

CAREER Tales

By Cecile G. Garcia

LIKE many priests today, Fr. Anton Pascual has transcended the boundaries of traditional priesthood. Pascual considers himself a servant leader and not merely a dispenser of sacraments, moving around parishes and taking care of communities. "I look at priesthood from an integrated point of view. I believe in integrating faith and praxis and I see no dichotomy in involving myself in non-religious activities and processes," he says. After 14 years in priesthood (he was ordained in 1987), Fr. Anton Pascual, a diocesan, has never been more convinced of his role within and outside the Catholic Church.

Pascual's leanings became clearer when he served as parish priest of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church in Lower Bicutan, Taguig for four years. Previously he was assistant parish priest of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal in Proj. 4, Quezon City, his first assignment after ordination.

Social justice

According to Pascual, as parish priest, he discovered that his calling was two-fold. He had been called not only to perform the sacred duties of a man of God but to pursue other goals as well. Seeing the plight of the urban poor in Taguig, Pascual realized that a significant part of his apostolate or ministry was to do something to alleviate it. "I found out my mission was to do my share towards the socio-economic upliftment of the urban poor. After all, social justice lies at the core of the evangelization of the church," declares Pascual.

This conviction brought about the Simbayanan Ni Maria Foundation and the Simbayanan Ni Maria Multi-Purpose Cooperative, both established in 1991. The foundation provides social services such as scholarships, job placements, health care and advocacy. To date, says Pascual, it has already sent more than 100 students to college. The cooperative, on the other hand, is geared towards the economic empowerment of the poor through savings and loans. "Today, we have P100M in resources," informs the priest, adding that they started with only P16,000. In 1995, he founded the Metro South Cooperative Bank, presently the biggest in the country in terms of membership. Pascual is currently the bank's founding director and treasurer and also chair of the National Capital Resign. Union of Cooperatives, the leading cooperative union in Metro Manila.

Crossing boundaries

Pascual's pioneering spirit, vision and leadership style are evident in whatever project or undertaking he sets his mind to. When he was parish priest, he recalls, he nearly became a candidate for town mayor of Taguig. "Of course, my superiors did not allow me to run," he says.

Nevertheless, the incident underscored Pascual's proclivity for crossing boundaries. "In my career as a priest and a servant leader I've often crossed boundaries between the church and the public service," he avers.

Perhaps a perfect example of this is Pascual's membership in the Presidential Conscience Committee, which facilitated the moratorium on the death penalty during the Jubilee Year. "Bishop Ted Bacani, Mike Velarde and I worked for the commutation of the death penalty to life imprisonment," says Pascual, who does not believe capital punishment has ever been a deterrent.

Pascual also acts as liaison between the Archdiocese of Manila and then vice president Gloria M. Arroyo, regularly attending meetings with her and other groups. Very political and very partisan—"A Christian cannot be neutral," he affirms—he is active in rallies and demonstrations. Pascual is a hardcore advocate of Estrada's resignation.

Spiritual director

Even when he was designated chaplain of Sto. Niño de Paz Chapel in Greenbelt, Makati in 1992, Pascual knew domestic chaplaincy work would never be enough. Consequently, he got involved in Catholic charismatic renewal groups such as El Shaddai of which he is spiritual director. With vigor, he likewise pursued existing interests and ventured into new ones. "In order to be a better leader in social development, I took up a master's degree in Development Management at AIM," volunteers Pascual who graduated from the prestigious institution in 1997. As a student at the Jesuit-run San Jose Seminary, by the way, he was drawn to the teachings of St. Ignatius. Earlier, he had been inspired by the life of St. Francis.

An extrovert who has passion for people, Pascual neatly balances his spiritual life and non-traditional approach to priesthood. Says he, "I never lose sight of my primary calling. My own spirituality is deeply rooted in prayer, discernment and spiritual readings." Amid various activities, everyday he finds time for solitude and silence and contemplation. "This gives me energy to continue my servant leadership," says Pascual. He discloses that he derives inspiration from God and the people and more significantly, from the God in them.

Tension

Because the church is traditional and instructional, Pascual admits that sometimes there is tension. But obviously he has unraveled the answer to this. "Join them. Get inside the institution and work from within. Instigate change and reform, transform from within," he insists.

PHOTO BY JOHNNY VILLENA

FR. Pascual has transcended the bounds of traditional priesthood.

Las year, Pascual ended his eight-year tenure as chaplain of the popular Greenbelt Landmark, leaving behind a legacy of visionary and enlightened leadership and additionally, memories of insightful and often humorous homilies, which likewise were founts of wisdom and beacons of light.

Although at the moment Pascual is not attached to any parish or community, he claims he is at peace as he attends to his many concerns, which include familiarizing himself in the different parishes, interacting with both religious and lay leaders, celebrating Holy Mass in malls and other venues.

Equally important is his job as vice president for programs of Radio Veritas, a position he assumed for the Catholic radio station in 1999. He is also deputy director of Caritas Manila, lead agency of the church for social service and development. "Actually, I'm fulfilled and at peace with all my assignments," confirms Pascual.

Changes

According to him, the church has undergone many changes in the last two decades. One of these is the emergence of ecclesial communities (such as charismatic renewal and family-oriented groups) and the development of lay leadership. "It's a good sign because the church has always been limited in terms of human resources," says Pascual. "Also, it has to respond to the times." As a member of the clergy and a servant leader, he welcomes these changes.

He further observes that it is relatively easier now to be a priest because as he explains, "There are emerging paradigms of priesthood. Some are called to serve as parish priests, while some are better suited to serve in the different ministries." Pascual feels he belongs to the latter category.

"A priest should be the model of Christian living," he says, "and moral ascendancy must begin with bishops and priests." There is even more challenge, however, for a servant leader like Pascual. He pronounces, "As I work for social justice, my challenge is to encourage grassroots communities to be leaders and social agents and to further encourage them to participate actively in providing social services."

Such a challenge will probably continue to push Pascual in the direction he has chosen. "I'll keep on crossing boundaries," he says.

Managing multiple tasks

Advice
FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

By Tita Datu Puangco

I AM an employee in a company that very recently downsized, or "right-sized," as management explained to us. Probably, I am fortunate that I am one of those chosen to stay. But now I am not sure whether I am really lucky. In our section, there used to be seven people doing the work, now there are only three of us. But the work remains exactly as it was before the downsizing. I find myself spending longer hours at work endangering my health and my work home balance. Please give me ideas as to how to cope with my new situation. I really want to do my job well.

Overwhelmed employee

Downsizing or rightsizing has become a business trend for many companies these days. We are sure it happens, not simply because it is fashionable or the companies desire to cut down on costs and job but for very real reasons such as achieving greater competitiveness and improving efficiencies. However, rightsizing is a change that requires profound study.

Process review

One of the ways to study rightsizing is doing a business process review. Ideally, business process reviews need to be undertaken to develop an ideal "should-be process." Streamlining processes usually eliminate 30 percent or more of non-value adding activities. Based on our experience, most companies who have not reviewed their processes waste a lot of effort on these non-value adding activities. After the business process review, the ideal structure and manning are developed. These reviews are undertaken by design teams who are able to solve problems and innovate on processes. In the case of your company I can sense that business process reviews have not been done before the downsizing occurred. That is why you are now overwhelmed by the work.

So, now what can you do? My primary suggestion is for you to initiate in your section an effort to review the processes that you cover. Get the two other members of your unit who may be encountering the same problems. It is a simple technique of mapping out the flow of your current activities. Then try to think through the problems of the current process.

Internal customer

Check out the views of your internal customer, meaning the persons or sections that use your service. They are the best judge of the quality and speed of your work. Find activities you can eliminate and then map out an "ideal process." It is important to do a trial run so you can perfect it. If you work for a bank, make sure to check out that the new process does not sacrifice controls. You will see that you will be able to eliminate or combine or modify some tasks. Then work out and agree with the other members of your team so work can be distributed more equally among you.

INCOMI-IIIING!
STEPH BRAVO

In today's business world, "multi-skilling" and "multi-tasking" are in. This means a person must be able to do whole tasks focusing more on "thinking" rather than simply doing. Our mindset for embracing whole jobs is critical if we are to enjoy our work. Rather than shirking from responsibility, one has to proactively embrace it. View the job as a learning experience. If you are given a strange task, open yourself to learning from your colleagues or ask your training unit for appropriate help. Gone are the days, when we process routine, mundane work that make us simply "a pair of hands." Productive and fruitful work is good not just for our minds but also for our souls. At the end of the day one feels fulfilled, ironically even energized by excellently done work.

Organizing work

After the business process review, comes the discipline of organizing our work. There are a number of simple techniques that help you get through a busy day. The president of a leading insurance company once confided to me "give a job that needs to be done to a busy man and it will get done." He is right because a busy man does not waste time, but makes full use of his time.

One technique is to make a daily "to do list." This list should include all the activities and events you expect to do in the day. These activities may be work, home, or socially related. Then, prioritize the list. Mark off the items A for activities that are urgent and important, B for those that are important but not urgent and C for those items that are not urgent and not important. Then take a look at the A items and prioritize them as well, the most urgent and important marked A-1, then A-2 and so on and so forth. Do this for the entire list. Spending 20 minutes of your time either early in your day or before you pack up to leave the office at the end of the day is time well spent.

Priorities

After setting your priorities in this manner, start work on the first priority item. Mark the time when it should get done. I am a great believer in "living the present moment well." This way I don't worry about the other items but I accomplish the task with concentration and perfection. Sometimes a person may come to call or the telephone rings. Do not feel hassled but instead shift gracefully into attending to the person. Forget the task and listen intently, note down quickly what the person is saying. Make sure you don't engage in empty prattle—remember there is a priority task waiting for you.

Another technique is to find the right place for everything. Think how we waste time because of sheer disorganization. We cannot find that information needed to do the task. We have to shift through mounds of paper in front of our desk. The key is to spend at least an hour a week putting files where they belong and marking them. It pays to work with a clean office table with lots of space. What I try to do is to organize all the materials required for my priority items on my desk even before I begin work. Now, I am not suggesting that you become paranoid about neatness and cleanliness so that they become obstacles to your creativity and spontaneity. But it really helps to follow the kindergarten lesson," if you mess up, you clean up". So tolerate some clutter but at the end of the day, return materials or things to their proper place.

Break big tasks

You can also breakdown the overwhelming task. When we have to do a job that requires many steps, our tendency is to set it aside. We feel mental paralysis and sheer helplessness. And yet these are tasks that are important and valuable. Try doing an outline of activities and promise that you will do two or three of the activities a day, until you are able to complete the work. In this way, the overwhelming task becomes a doable task.

Check if you are a lark or an owl. Larks work best in the morning. So, reserve tasks that require concentration in the morning when you feel most energized and refreshed. Larks are early starters and tend to lose energy towards the end of the day. If you are an owl, you are a late starter. You need to begin with the activities that take less mental or physical energy. But as the day moves on you gather momentum. The end of the day leaves you with much energy to tackle the more difficult tasks

Finally, review your use of time. At the end of the day, look at how your day went. Track down your time robbers and go for continuous improvement. Don't forget the need to balance. Once in a while you have to take time out in front of the computer to relax, stretch your legs and engage in friendly talk with colleagues. This, too, is needed if we are to live a productive yet meaningful life.

Try these techniques and happy working. God bless you.

(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. For comments, feedback or advice for problems at work, you can email to ancillaedc@pacific.net.ph *or send a fax to #892-2902.)*

PMAP holds induction rites for 2001 board

THE PERSONNEL Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) inducts today its new officers and board of directors for year 2001 during its 463rd General Membership Meeting at the Edsa Shangrila-Hotel. Mr. Federico R. Marquez, Jr., vice president for human resources of Guoco Holdings Philippines, will take his oath of office as the incoming PMAP President. Mr. Roberto F. De Ocampo, president of the Asian Institute of Management, will serve as the inducting officer and guest speaker. Mr. De Ocampo will speak on "Humanizing Business in the New Economy", which is also the PMAP theme for 2001.

Other PMAP Officers for 2001 are: Ernesto G. Espinosa (Fujitsu Computer Products Corp.), vice president; Ramon S. Medina, FPM (RFM Corporation), Board secretary; and Lina A. Aseneta (Fernandez, Santos & Lopez, CPAs), treasurer. Other directors are: Atty. Emerico O. De Guzman, FPM (ACCRA Law Office), Atty. Editha Hechanova (VE Del Rosario & Partners), Paulette M. Hernandez, FPM (Novartiz Consumer Health Phils.), Jimmy M. Isidro (Tri-Q Responsible Services), Bernardo N. Jambalos III (Matrix Corporate Security), Atty. Josephus B. Jimenez, FPM (Pepsi Cola Products Phils.), Lenida T. Paderanga (Executive Development Academy), Roberto M. Policarpio (Duty Free Philippines), Alessandro G. Salazar (Zuellig Pharma Corp.), Joaquin W. Sumpaico, AFPM (Wyeth Philippines), and Cecilia C. Torino (Lapanday Group of Companies—Davao). Ex-Officio Board members are Ms. Solita V. Delantar, FPM (Honda Philippines), Rene M. Gener (San Miguel Corporation), and Gerry A. Plana (executive director).

PMAP is a 44-year old professional association of human resource management and business executives. It seeks to develop and promote the HRM profession and the HR practitioner. PMAP currently has 13 Chapters all over the country with a total membership of some 1,200 corporations and individual HR practitioners.

Narrow down your Big Life Goals

RECIPES for LEARNING

By Moje Ramos-Aquino

THIS is an interesting dialogue from the comic strip "Claire" by Doug Shannon.

Anton: There are as many realities as there are people, Jason Grimes.

Jason: That's too many to deal with—I've narrowed it down.

In this life, we need to be like more like Jason and understand our own Big Life Goals (BLG) in order for us to act more consistently to accomplish them. Indeed, many of us are not conscious of our own priorities. We want to do a lot at the same time or at the shortest possible time. But life is not a shortcut to your Personal Vision and Mission. Life is meant to be savored and enjoyed as you go towards your ideal future.

Poem

My son Adrian found this beautiful poem, author unknown, while visualizing his future career life. It is for new graduates but it might as well apply to all of you who have not, to this day, defined the future that you want and are still struggling with life and blaming life itself for your being stuck.

A Fresh Graduate's Rhyme
Finding a job is easy,
Building a career is a different story.
Will I toil just to earn money?
Or will I work to make myself happy?

Shall I join a multinational corporation?
The government? The academe?
A non-government organization?
After all these years of preparation,
Do I possess the necessary qualifications?

How can I ever be sure
That I've got what it takes
To be an entrepreneur?
I ask myself, what do I really want to do?

In my life, what do I value?
Glamour? Success? Social responsibility?
Do they hold any meaning for me?
Service to nation, moral integrity
Are they my top priority?

I can ignore the questions,
I can pretend they don't exist,
But it seems sooner or later,
They'll put me to the test.

Therefore, I must think. I must choose.
I believe I hold the key.
If I don't, someone else
Will run my life for me!

Therefore, there is a need to narrow down your BLG to a number that will enable you to care for the various realities of your life, e.g. personal, social, family, career, spiritual and many others.

Visualization

To make sure that your goals are clear, try visualizing them. The clearer the mental picture of your goals, the easier it is for you to understand, appreciate and accomplish your goals. This way, you spend less energy on false starts and unnecessary or unwanted actions.

For example, if one of your BLG is to have your own house, have a visual image of the house that you want as if you are now ready to buy that house. Include who and how many people will live in your house, lot size, floor area, number of floors, number of rooms, how big the individual rooms will be, desired options, price range and other such details. Draw or sketch it on paper. Write down some of the details. Visualization entails concentration, imagination and creativity and the results could be exhilarating and motivating. It is the first step towards achieving your BLG.

And the next step is making the decision to act and actually acting on that decision. We will take this up next week as we continue our Workshop on Setting Personal Goals, Objectives & Action Plans.

Write it down

Meanwhile, you will now finalize by writing your BLG statements in order to bridge the gap between reality or who and where you are at the moment and your dream or what or where you want to be within your planning horizon. Your BLG statements should identify WHAT to be accomplished, WHO will be involved, WHEN the activity will be completed and HOW MUCH will it cost and what resources will be used.

Your BLG statements should be S.M.A.R.T.S.

S is for specific as in detailed or focused, not too general. For example, to finish college is not specific. To graduate with honors from the University of the Philippines with a degree in civil engineer is specific.

M is for measurable, in terms of quality and quantity. For example, to pass the board exams for civil engineering with top honors is measurable. To be a good student is not measurable. The word good is vague and does not provide a standard of measure of accomplishment.

A is for action-oriented. Use action verb to tell you what you need to do to accomplish your goal. Some examples of action verb phrases are: graduate with honors, build a house, pass the board exams, set up own construction company, raise a happy family, travel around the world. Action verbs describe the type of activity to be performed and indicate an action that produces results.

R is for realistic. Your BLG should be practical, achievable and possible, if not now, then in the future that you have set. To finish a course in behavioral science in two years time is not realistic because you need at least eight semesters or ten trimesters to tackle the required academic units.

T is time-bound and resource-constrained. Your goal should have finite start and end, and resource constraints to ensure that there is practical cost/benefit relationship to goal achievement. You may not have the money now but you will have it as you act on your goal. Simply to write the goal "to build a mansion" is not time-bound and is most unlikely to be achieved. Time limits promote much needed urgency to achieve your goal.

S is for stretched. Goals should be something that you need to exert extra effort in order to achieve them. Your goals should basically improve your present lot by big or quantum leaps. Otherwise, it is just doing what you have always been doing and it will not lead you anywhere near your ideal future. A former neighbor used to say, "I just want to work abroad." And so she did—four times she went to Malaysia to work as a domestic helper. Every time she comes home, she is more unhappy than when she first went there. She used to be a schoolteacher earning a modest income. She worked beneath her competencies. She earns a little more but her self-esteem has been eroded.

Please be reminded also that your BLG should not only be your own SMARTS goals but should also consider the aspects of legality, morality and ethics.

There you go. When you finish writing your BLG, discuss them with your planning team and your significant others to make sure that your feet are firmly planted on the ground. Nest week, you shall be ready to strategize towards achieving your goals.

ASTD 2001

Here's some info for HR practitioners, management professionals and anybody who is interested in his/her continuing development and education. ASTD 2001 can be part of your BLG. This year's American Society for Training and Development Conference and Exhibition will be held at the Orlando Convention Center, Orlando, Florida, USA on June 2-7, 2001. Our company, Paradigms & Paradoxes Consultants, has been designated as the official Delegation Organizer for the Philippines. If you are interested, please send us email to (moje@PARADIGMSand PARADOXES.zzn.com) or call us at telephone 715-9332 for the brochure. We are preparing a modest package that includes attendance to the conference, city tour, and air transport and hotel accommodation.

(Email feedback to moje.ramos@aquino.zzn.com)

e-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph.

PEOPLE at WORK

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ REGINA GALANG REYES, Subsection Editor

WOMEN LEADERS IN THE WORKPLACE

Breaking the glass ceiling

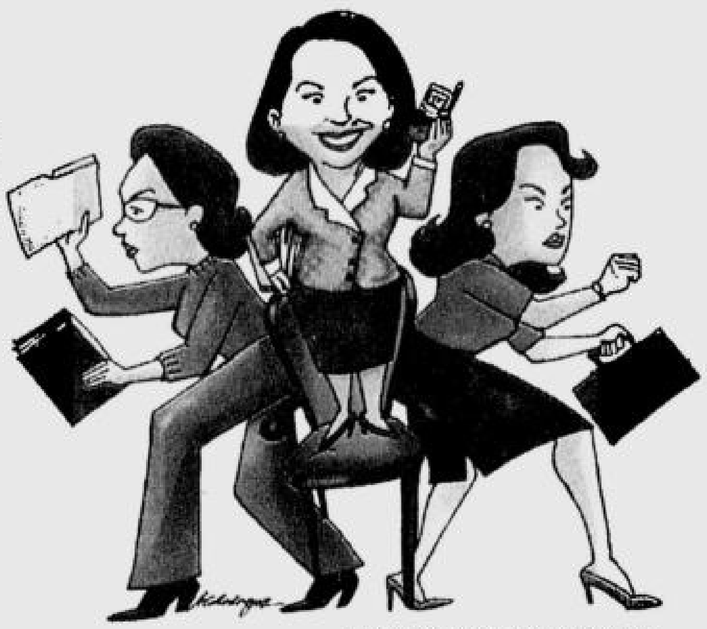

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

BY ERNIE O. CECILIA

ONCE upon a time, women's roles in life were limited to reproduction, child-rearing and domestic chores and the woman's place was the home.

Then, Abigail Adams and a few women's rights advocates cried out loud and the whole world listened. They got the attention they needed when they said, "If a particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation."

Suddenly, the fairy tale was shattered and the boundaries of the real world of women extended beyond the realm of the domestic household.

Women's success

Today, the workplace is replete with women's success stories in fields earlier dominated by men. It is estimated that 25 percent of chief executive officers in America are women. But, this is in stark contrast to the grim reality that probably two-thirds of the women in the world today are poor, uneducated and jobless.

In business, government and non-government organizations in the Philippines today, we continue to see the ascendance of women to top leadership posts. Whether by constitutional fiat or by coup d'etat, we have a woman at the helm of the Philippine government. President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo is like a breath of fresh air in a slowly decaying society.

Characteristics

What makes women leaders tick in the workplace? What makes people want to follow women leaders? What do women have that makes them natural leaders?

From a man's point of view, let me cite a few observations. Successful women leaders have the following:

- Character

To inspire confidence, a leader must have character. The development of character is at the very heart of development as a person and as a leader. Women, by the nature of their roles at home in the early stages of development, are trained to be paragons of honesty, respectability and integrity. Mothers forbid their daughters from engaging in any form of vice and exact a great measure of honesty from them. The degree of integrity required of a growing daughter is usually greater than that of a growing son. It is not surprising that some women grow up to have a stronger bedrock character.

- Flexibility

That women are quick to "change their minds" is a misconception. Actually, they are only being flexible and can adapt to changing situations more easily. Ed Oakley and Doug Krug, in "Enlightened Leadership," aver that the new leadership roles require "creating a major shift in their people's mindsets from one that keeps them stuck in boxes to one that naturally searches for new and innovative solutions."

Service

- Discernment

Many women, who are bombarded with a daily barrage of information from radio, newspapers, gossiping neighbors, intriguing work mates, or even philandering husbands, have learned to discern and ferret out the truth.

- Servanthood

The new form of leadership is servanthood or servant leadership. If your mindset of a servant is a lowly domestic position, it is about time you disabuse your mind. Servant leadership is not about position. It is about an attitude of service. This is not new to women whose traditional role early in life is to serve.

Eugene B. Habecker said, "The true leader serves. Serves people. Serves their best interests and in so doing, will not always be popular, may not always impress. But because true leaders are motivated by loving concern rather than a desire for personal glory, they are willing to pay the price."

- Attitude

The psychologist William James revealed, "The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitude of mind." Many women, perhaps borne out of circumstances or past experiences, develop a positive attitude and never give up. They are usually more patient and persevering. Generally, women also have a higher threshold of pain and frustration. In this case, Zig Ziglar is right in saying "attitude, not aptitude, determines altitude."

Learning

- Passion

You probably will not remember who Marya Sklodowska was. She was born of poor Polish parents, spent her early life doing chores but had a passion for learning. She became a governess and tutor and supported her elder sister and herself to school in Paris. She topped her Physics class, had a master's degree in mathematics and worked full-time researching on her passion for the secret of the uranium rays. She later met Pierre who became her husband and research partner. She made breakthroughs in radioactivity and finally opened the door to the study of nuclear physics and medical radiology with her discovery of the x-ray. She pursued her passion even after Pierre died. Today, people know her as Madame Marie Curie.

- Vision

John Sculley, former CEO of Pepsi and Apple Computer, once said, "The future belongs to those who see possibilities before they become obvious." Today, there are probably more men than women who are successful visionaries in the workplace. But, the difference is that women seem to have more passion in their vision. They sleep over it, dream about it even when awake, and pursue it to the hilt. Also, girls at an early age start to dream of the future they want. Boys usually dabble with present realities.

These are some of the outstanding characteristics of successful women leaders in the workplace. These are some of the reasons why they break the glass ceiling and go even beyond their perceived potential.

The new economy calls for new paradigms of leadership. Four decades ago, a man foresaw the need for this new leadership. John F. Kennedy said, "It is time for a new generation of leadership, to cope with new problems and new opportunities. For there is a new world to be won." And women, with their own innovative version of leadership, are part of this new generation of leaders.

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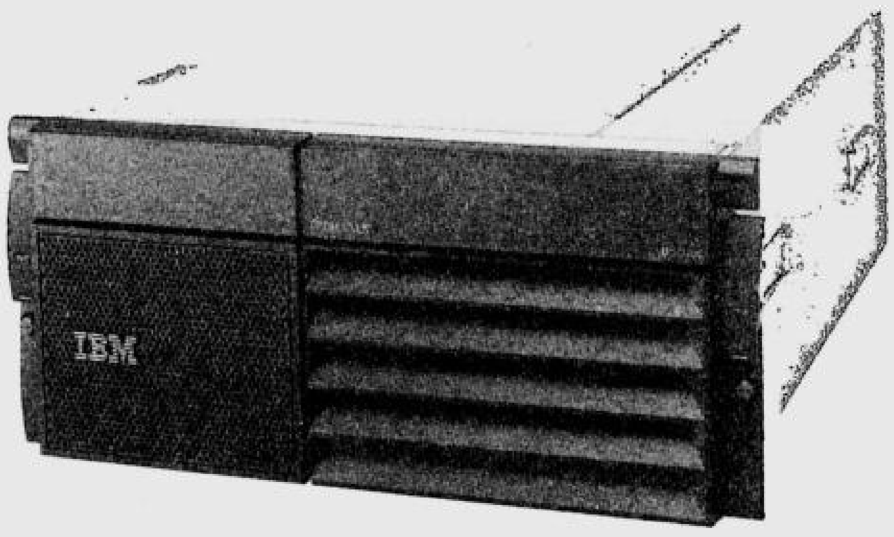

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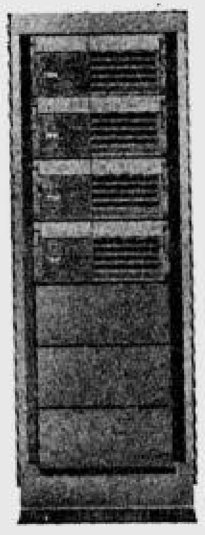

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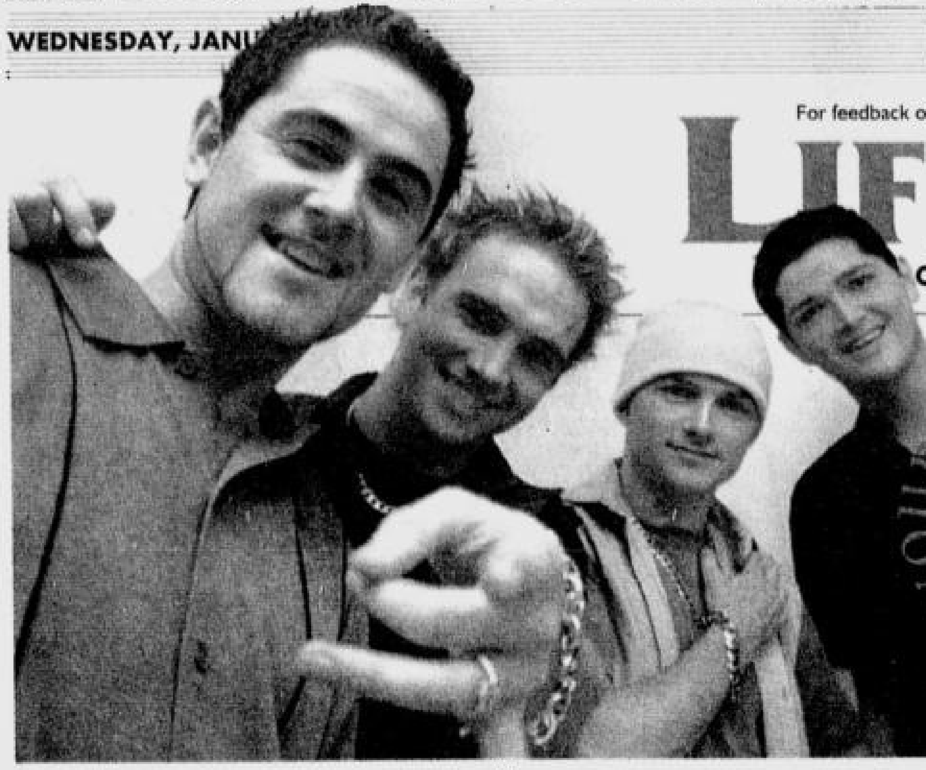

MYTOWN. "We don't deny being a boy band."

Ready for another boy band?

BY MAUI V. REYES
2bu! Correspondent

NEXT to Orlando, Ireland seems to be the hot spot for boys who want to sing and dance and be at top of every possible chart (music charts, radio charts...girl's crush-list charts). So who cares when you have Westlife and Boyzone? There's plenty of space in the world for a little more lovin'. And then there's four Dublin-raised guys, known as Mytown, who want to take in some of that love.

Formed in 1996 in Dublin, Ireland, Marc (Sheehan), Paul (Walker), Terry (Daly) and Danny (O'Donoghue) have gone where other Irish boy bands dare not charter—the murky waters of San Francisco, Philadelphia, Virginia and Los Angeles. Recording their debut in the States wasn't the only bang this album has—chuck in producers Teddy Riley of Blackstreet and the members of Boyz II Men, Mytown already boasts so much credit for an up-and-coming band.

Determined to break boy band stereotypes, Mytown ditches most of the dance moves and opts to perform live songs with two members on guitars (although dance moves aren't a problem since band member Marc is a choreographer), and even penned songs on the album. And of course, don't forget the live performances. These guys swear to only do shows live, and all that rehearsal pays off when you get asked to perform in Bosnia at the request of the Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson.

While they were in Manila, 2bU! had an exclusive chat with the four Irish guys, who just hooked up with Penshoppe (expect to see more hotties in casual wear in the mall).

You're the nth Irish boy band out there...okay, don't tell me you'll deny being a boy band...

Marc: Oh no, we're not denying we're a boy band. I've probably said this a million times, but a lot of boy bands out there are afraid to call themselves that, probably because they're insecure. We're not afraid being called a boy band...we write our own material, we play our own instruments, so we're on

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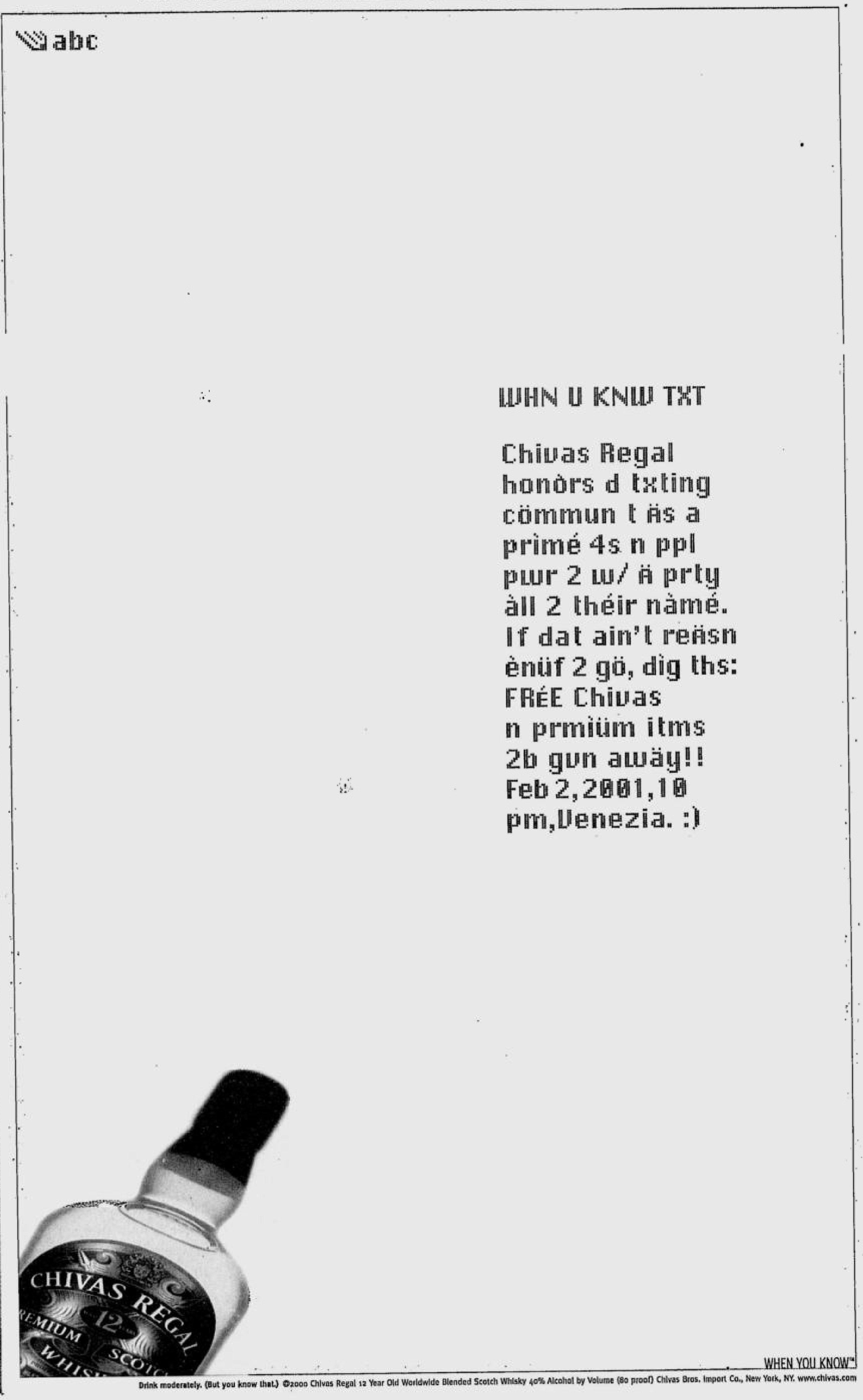

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Ready for another boy band?

(From page C1)

the positive side of this "boy band" thing.

Do you think there are too many of them?

M: I think there are so many rock bands out there, too.

Danny: The thing is, boy bands are the ones that are always in the press nowadays.

M: Majority of things of how to get a boy band started is by promo and press. They need to get their faces on TV and in print, we need to let the girls know we're out there and they need to feel like we're popular and that we're the band to follow. Rock bands don't need to go that route, so they don't need to do all that. I mean, people will say, "Who the hell are the Dave Matthews Band?," but then there they are, selling out arenas. We're just a heavily promoted genre, so people think there are too many of us.

TERRY Daly

Boy band lyrics always talk about loving girls "forever." Are boy band lyrics for real?

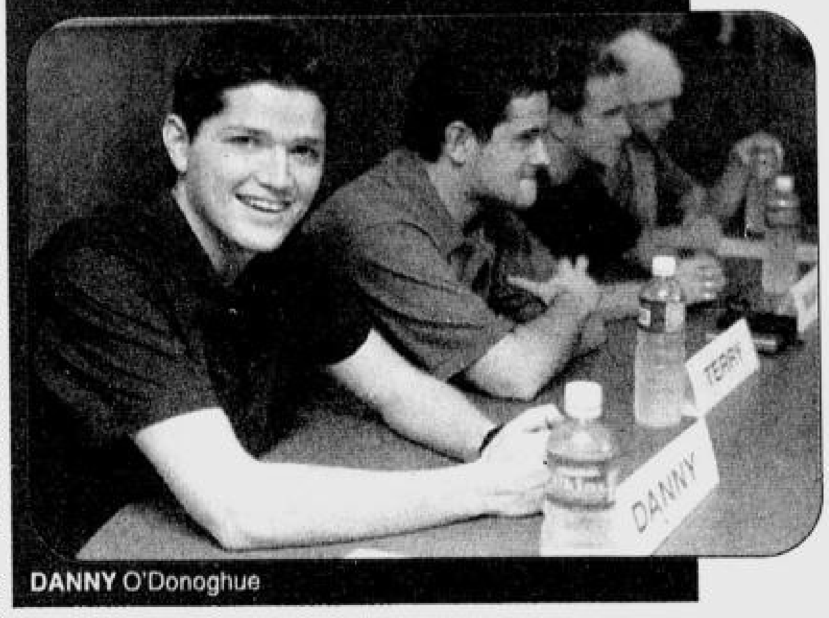
M: Do we mean them? No. Well not all, anyway. For example, how can a lot of artists out there say they mean what they sing when they didn't write their own music? We do write our own stuff, but I'm not going to say they're all for real.

D: A lot of journalists say our lyrics are different from others. I mean, we have a song called "Have You Ever Made Love to a Girl in Tears?," and that's one song that we argued about, whether to include in the album or not. And there's another song, "Body Bumpin'," where you meet a girl in a club and you find out she's underage, she was just messin' with you. So not all our songs are "I love you, you love me, let's go and build a tree," you know?

Terry: A big chunk of our market are teenagers, and they don't like listening to songs they don't understand. You want to be able to sing along to a song, too...

M: Like now, we're in Asia, and we've been told to speak slowly and clearly to be understood, and that over here everybody loves ballads. It's gotta be a clear message.

D: Like Destiny's Child, they have all these beats and they track-master it over and over...



DANNY O'Donoghue

And their grammar's bad.

M! I know you guys go to school here to learn English, and you learn how to speak it properly, and some band just comes in and messes it up!

How long does it take to learn a song someone else wrote?

T: Most of the songwriting's done together, and it's some sort of formality, and by the time the song's been written, you know the song already.

D: To get a song done, for example, an acoustic song, to get it done really tight, I'd say a week.

Do you bring different kinds of things to the creative table?

T: That's the fun thing about writing, when you're jamming on a song and when you're stuck in a certain part, someone will throw something at the table, and you have four different opinions coming in. And it's not a winning formula. I'm not saying it works all the time...Danny wrote a song on the album entirely by himself. If you think what you wrote is going to work, then go ahead.

Do you ever fight over which song will be included in the album?

T: No, we talk things over. When I write a song and it's bad, you know, they come up and say, "The chorus is really good, but the rest of the song is crap," and we talk it over.

M: If someone said Let's do three songs to perform tonight, what three songs will you perform? And that's when we go, "Uh-oh..." But you don't pick whatever song you like, you perform the kind of songs that appeal to your target market. But you have to play uptempo songs, you have to get some energy.

So you're recording your new album soon in the US... are you psyched about that?

D: We know we have a new sound...

M: That we have a finger on the pulse...

D: But I don't know how to get a hold on it yet.

M: This is going to be an album which when we put it together, every single song is going to be really, really tight. And when that comes out, we'd like to do the third album and make that better than the second.

T: You learn a lot of mistakes from recording the first album, so we'll be able to do well on this one. Better, actually.

PAUL Walker

Is being in a boy band anything like the show "Making the Band"?

T: My personal opinion on that is the way we formed was the exact opposite of that. That to me is how somebody can come along and pick a group of guys and transform them into a band.

Paul: The whole point of that show is for television ratings. It's a drama show.

M: I just saw it a couple of weeks ago, and it's exploiting those boys as musicians. It's showing your weak points-off, and when you do that, people will know that things you can and can't do. And that doesn't work in business. You have to be able to make mistakes behind closed doors, because you already do so much in public.

D: I mean, the [vocal coach] is told by the network to come in and give the boys a hard time, like, "Come in here and make one of them cry to make ratings go up."

T: I can imagine a couple of years from now when they get really successful, they'll look back and say, "Why did I do that?" At the start, when someone promises you fame, you'll jump at it, not thinking of the future.

M: We've met the guys themselves, and they're really nice guys. I think what happens also is they spend 48 hours a week filming, and they break it down to 30 minutes, and pick out all the bad stuff for television. We don't see the nice things, just the bad things. You see that so many times, and they never show the good persons they are. They start thinking you're an asshole. That's the power of TV.

T: And it's like, for a teenage girl, it's very important that she doesn't see everything. Now before they release a single, people will go, "Oh I don't like him and that member because..." And it's not about the music, it's about the people.

M: We're in the music business, we're here to make music, not for our lives to be exploited. It's hard enough to keep your private life private. *(the guys go on and on about media exploitation...)* The thing bands need is a lot of discipline. And we're under a lot of pressure...you see, we always perform live, everything we do is live. We tend not to want to stick to things that people tell us to do, what to wear...*(looks down)* and here I am sitting in with clothes I was told to wear. There are certain guidelines.

Growing up, did you really, really, really want to be in a band?

D: Actually, for me it was different. I wanted to be a stuntman. But my mom was like, "No, you're going to be a musician, just like your father." And I used to cry in bed at night. But at around 9 or 10 I started to get into music.

Did the sudden spurt of all these boy bands push you to get together?

P: Well, even before New Kids on the Block was out, we wanted to do something like this. I remember seeing Jason Donovan singing years and years ago, and I was going, "Look at him, this is awful sounding," and my friend says, "Look at him, he's standing there and you're not!" He had a point there.

And then, one day a kid's gonna see you guys onstage and say that. *(laughter)*

M: It's funny though because most people who would laugh will do that! I've seen a lot of guys I know laugh at the idea that we dance and sing. And then I say, "Listen man, come to my class, I think you'll be a good dancer, there are lots of girls there," and a week later they're all dancing away in my class.

Everybody, describe Danny.

M: Tall, dark and handsome.

T: Innocent. He's innocent.

M: *(snotty)* Innocent in what?!

T: There are a lot of things that are like...*(trails off)*

M: Terry's stupid, there you go!

T: Danny can be good in so many things, like music and stuff, but there are other things that make you go, "Omigosh, you're so young."

M: He's very talented. Not innocent like what Terry said.

T: But I think he is!

P: Naïve is more the right word.

Let's all pick on Marc.

P: A very driven guy.

D: People gravitate toward him. When you're in a bar everybody just gravitates toward him and everyone wants to listen to what he's saying.

T: Definitely driven.

M: And I can't even drive a car!

T: One of the most stubborn people I know! You don't know what way to take him sometimes. Sometimes he can wreck your head, and then later he's all cool. It's like, I want to hate this person, but I can't!

D: He's such a cutie!

T: When he smiles you see his teeth and it's just, "Yeah!!!"

Paul?

T: Paul is just driven. Paul is innocent.

D: Paul's a psycho. He's very quiet.

T: There are a lot of things going on in his head that I don't want to even know. He's into science fiction and UFOs and he's really into space.

You can't relate?

T: No, I can't!

M: No, Terry can't relate, but we can! Paul's very driven. For example, when we type in the schedule, when you punch in the informa-tion...*(everyone laughs)*, you give us the itinerary, you can't change that anymore. Or else he'll go, "Listen, you can't add that, it's not in the schedule!"

P: I'm very touchy about stuff like that. Like, if someone tells me my day ends at 4 and then later someone will say it'll end at 5, that will put me in a foul mood for the rest of the day.

D: He's got so many things scheduled for the day already and it just messes everything up.

P: Like, I was reading our schedule and I saw that on [Sunday] we leave for Los Angeles when we were supposed to leave for Ireland. I swear, I was ready to kill somebody, stone dead. Luckily, it wasn't us going to Los Angeles, [but another artist] we were going back to Dublin.

Alright, Terry...

M: Woohoo! Let's all leave the room!

P: Erm...

D: Um...he's a sweetheart? He's a best friend?

P: *(hands him a P500 bill)* Here, for being a great friend.

M: He's very funny. No matter what we do, he's constantly in a good mood. He's always smiling.

T: I've never heard so much bullshit in all my life! I swear!

Sweetest thing you've ever done for a girl?

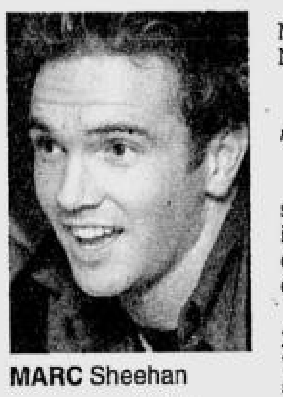
P: We flew in Marc's girlfriend to New York.

Define sexy.

D: D-A-N-N-Y. *(everyone looks at him)*

T: Madonna.

M: It's not all about showing off skin, but it's just someone who's oozing with sex appeal, confidence.



MARC Sheehan

Danny, let's say you're out on a date with an Italian model and you forgot your wallet.

D: I'd say, "Hang on for a minute," and then I'd make a run for it.

You'll just leave her?!

D: Yeah. She'll be back. *(everyone laughs)*

M: I'll just say I'm really embarrassed and tell her to pay for it. Or else. I'll be in the kitchen washing dishes really quick!

D: I'll steal her wallet.

Terry, who'd win at "Survivor"?

T: Paul. See, you survive by eating. And we're very picky about what we eat. Paul will eat logs with leaves. He'll eat anything. I can see him fishing and stuff. Marc would win, but he's very picky about what he eats. He'd build houses but he'll die of starvation. I wouldn't survive because I'd spend too much time boiling the salt out of the water.

Marc, let's say you did something really bad and when you get into jail, your inmate is Eminem.

T: It's time to kick the sh*t out of him.

M: No, I'd sit there and laugh my butt off. I'll just say it's funny, you know, rapper, who hates boy bands, and boy band, sitting here with you in the cell. I actually watched a program about his life story, and before, I used to hate him so much, but now I understand him. He's a really great guy.

D: Slug him.

M: You can't slug him! I'd have a decent conversation with him.

D: What if he wants to play Mommies and Daddies or something?! *(everyone laughs)*

Paul, best hangover cure?

P: More alcohol. That's our cure. If you have a bad hangover, go back to the pub.

M: You gotta have the same drink you had.

T: My friend was in an awful state of a hangover, and his Mom gave him hard liquor.

P: In Ireland it's true, more alcohol.

"Mytown," under MCA Universal Records, is now out in the market.

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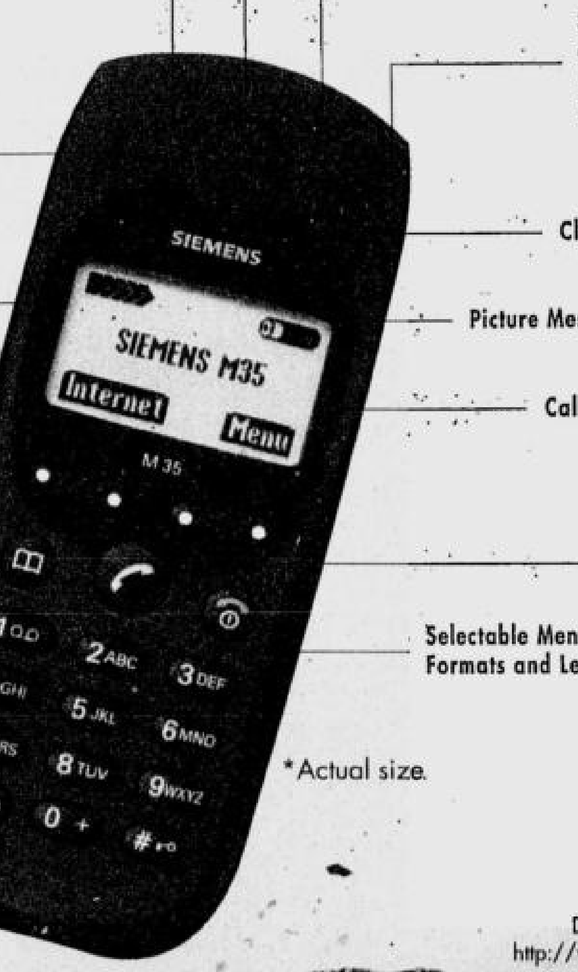
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Accessorizing one's look

I AM dying to get a tattoo. Please suggest a design that is timeless and feminine. This is not an impulse because I have wanted this for two years now.

ALEXA

Makeover 911
Kinny Salas

I am going to pass on the suggestion part. Once upon a time I wanted a tattoo as well but I was extremely fickle and would eventually get sick of a particular design so I opted not to get one. You know what, I do not regret it now because I enjoy looking at that smooth area. From afar and even in photographs tattoos can look like scars. Thinking of those letters people send me about wanting to erase their *peklat* made me change my mind. As for a timeless design? No such thing, back in the '70s I am sure they thought the peace sign was timeless. If you can't even decide on what you want I do not think you are a candidate for a tattoo. Something this permanent is too serious to experiment with. When I was in high school I wanted nothing more than cobalt blue hair and I pined for that for no less than three years. When I think about it now I want to duck my head in shame. Point is, just because you have wanted this for a long time, doesn't mean the day for regrets won't come.

I have a really short neck and it makes me look awkward. What type of clothes should I wear and how do I camouflage?

KIMIKO

Avoid covering the neck area. The tendency of some is to cover this part up hoping people won't notice. The effect will be the exact opposite because it will look like your head is stuck to your chest. Avoid turtlenecks, mandarin collars and polo shirts buttoned all the way up. Open two buttons of your polo for that V-neck effect. Keep scarves away from the neck and drop the chokers and short necklaces. Hair that is too long will draw attention to this spot as well. Keep hairstyles from short to medium length. Your blouses or shirts should have open necks. Use V, boat, keyhole, sweetheart necklines if your face is square as these give an illusion of thinner faces as well. If the face is soft or rounded, go for draped, scooped or square necklines. Showing the flesh of your upper chest and collarbone will give the illusion of a longer neck.

FYI: Everyone swoons at the thought of a Frenchwoman and we automatically peg them as the epitome of sexy and stylish. Well, there is one more example we must emulate and that is their attitude toward clothes. Filipinos are incredibly embarrassed when they are seen wearing the same outfit even if there was a long enough time span for people to know they have done their laundry.

Well the classy French are the exact opposite. Like us, the French put value in quality over quantity, but while we go broke trying to fill our closet with expressive quality designer clothes, the French believe less is best. They will review the magazines and runways for the latest trend and decide which will flatter them the most or what piece they cannot live without. This particular outfit is then worn as often as they can. Instead of thinking "Has anyone seen me wearing this previously?" they think in terms of "Who else hasn't seen this outfit?" The joy of dressing up for them is the challenge of accessorizing or changing the outfit's look. For instance, a navy dress will be worn with red pumps and matching purse one day, then knee-high black boots and a tiny black hat the next day. The possibilities are endless with scarves, shawls, cardigans, summer sandals, jewelry etc. If we adapted this attitude maybe we would be more secure and less of a fashion victim.

For any questions, or products you want to road test, write to Makeover 911, PDI Lifestyle or fax at 897-4805

The Varsitarian

UST sets big victory party

UST Varsitarian celebrates Edsa 2

THE VARSITARIAN, the 73-year-old official student publication of the University of Santo Tomas, has released a special commemorative edition on People Power II.

The 12-page special issue contains behind-the-scenes accounts on the University's groundbreaking participation in the Edsa 2 rallies, as well as a chronology of significant events leading to the nation's second bloodless uprising in 15 years.

It also contains feature articles on the "losers of Edsa 2," notably UST alumni such as former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa ("A Sterling Career Ends in Ignominy") and Sen. Francisco Tatad ("On the Wrong Side of History, Again").

The issue likewise reveals the reason for the surprising silence of the usually outspoken pro-Estrada Dominican Fathers Sonny Ramirez, Larry Faraon and Rogelio Alarcon at the height of People Power 2. The center spread contains moving photos taken from Edsa 2 and anti-Estrada activities on the UST campus.

Copies of the commemorative issue are available at the Varsitarian office at Room 112, UST Main Building. You may also access the issue from the Varsitarian website at www.ust.edu.ph/varsitarian.

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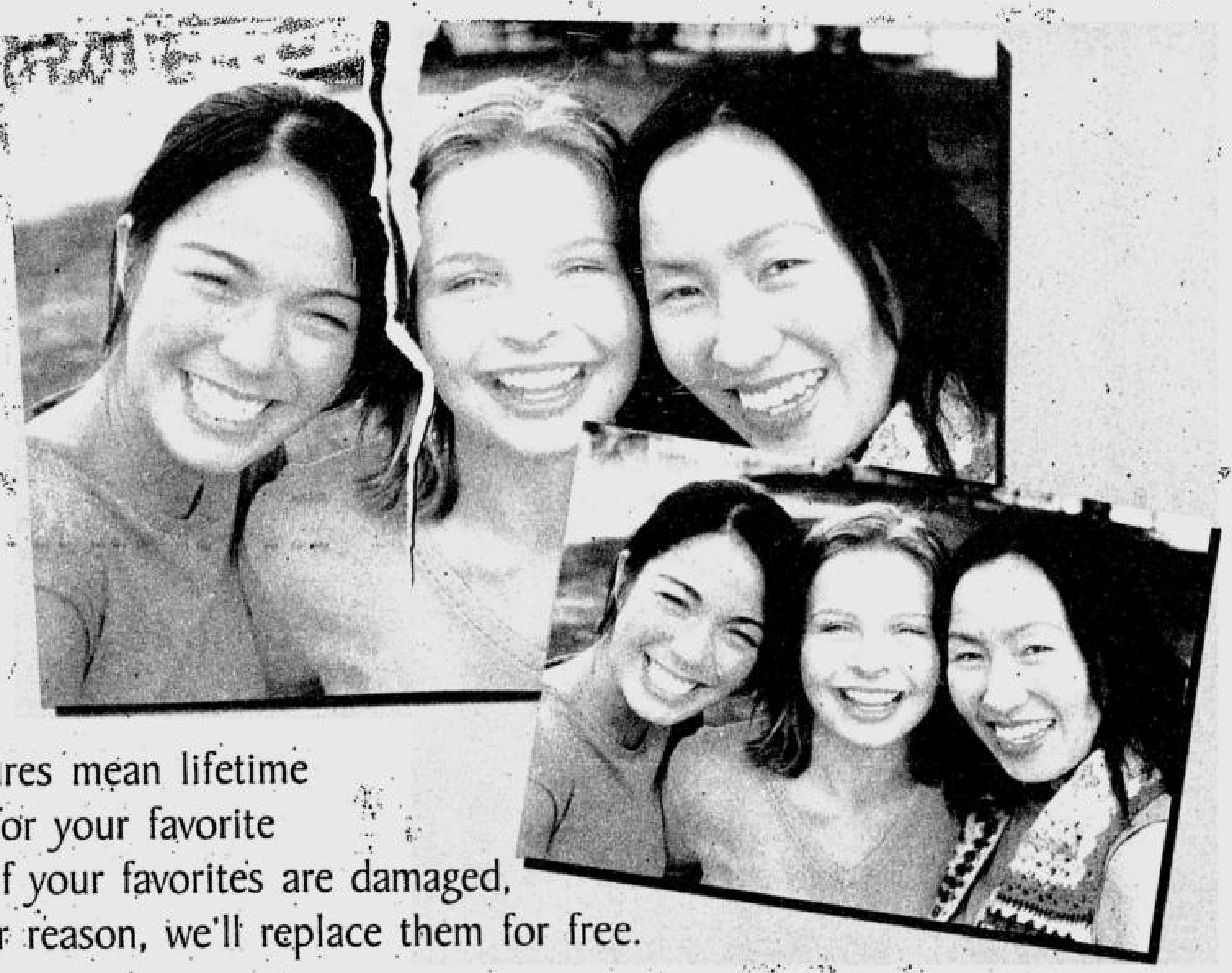

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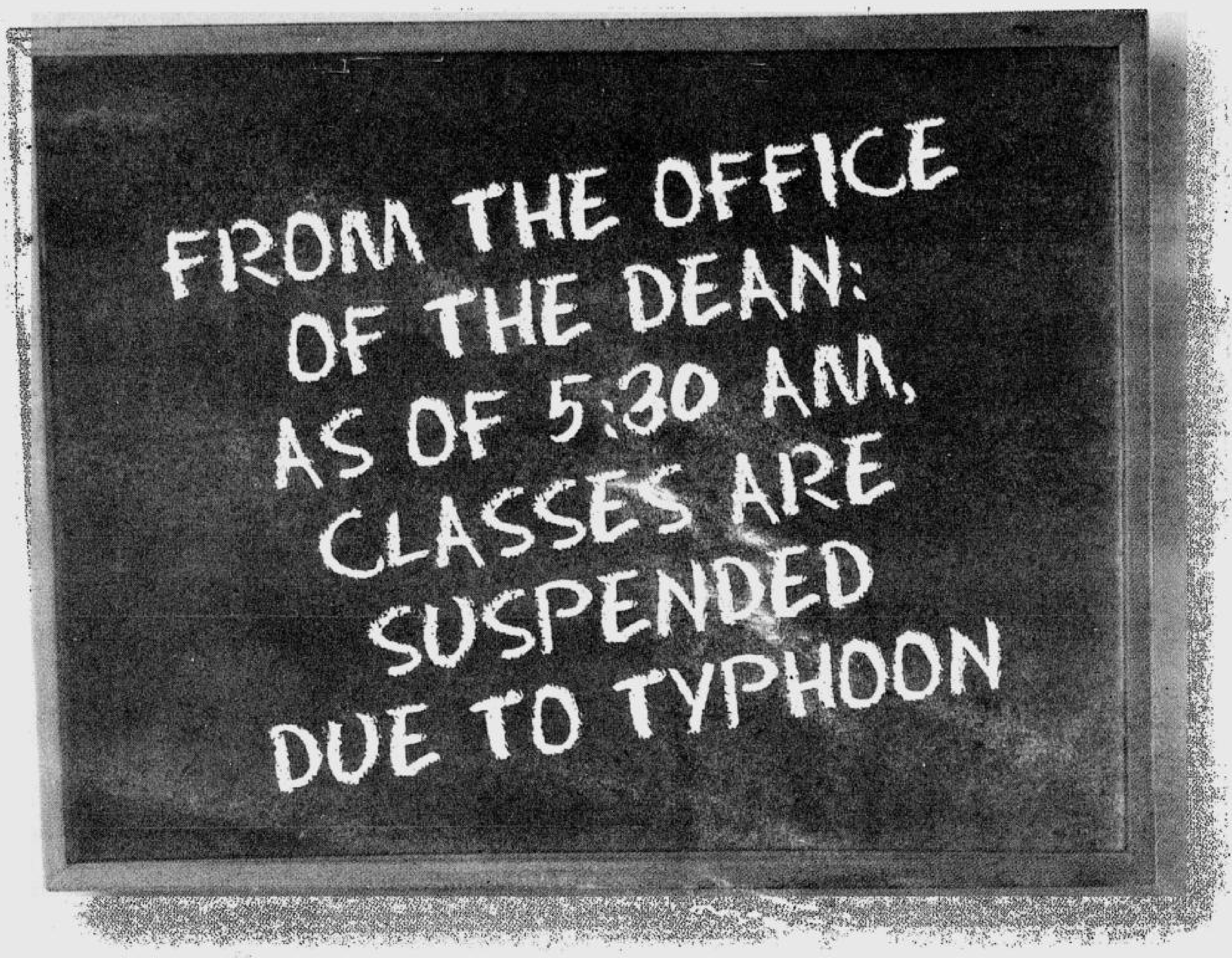
Pimple's worst enemy

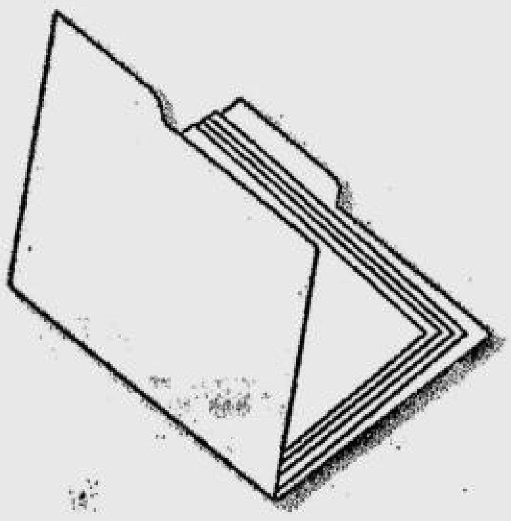
PA-03-00-PH

This bulletin board just turned


FROM THE OFFICE
OF THE DEAN:
AS OF 5:30 AM,
CLASSES ARE
SUSPENDED
DUE TO TYPHOON

Introducing

GlobeXPL



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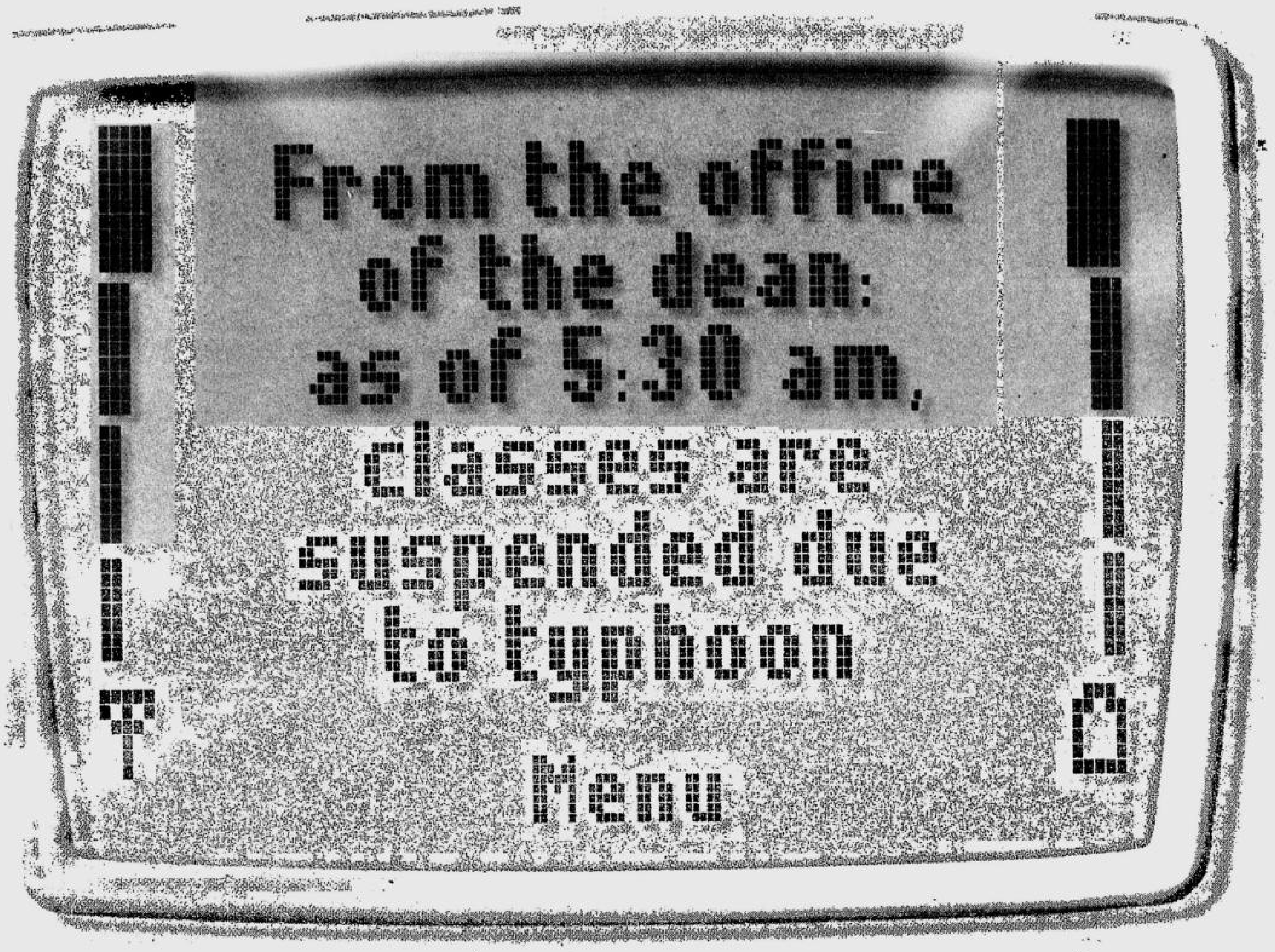

From the office of the dean: as of 5:30 am, classes are suspended due to typhoon

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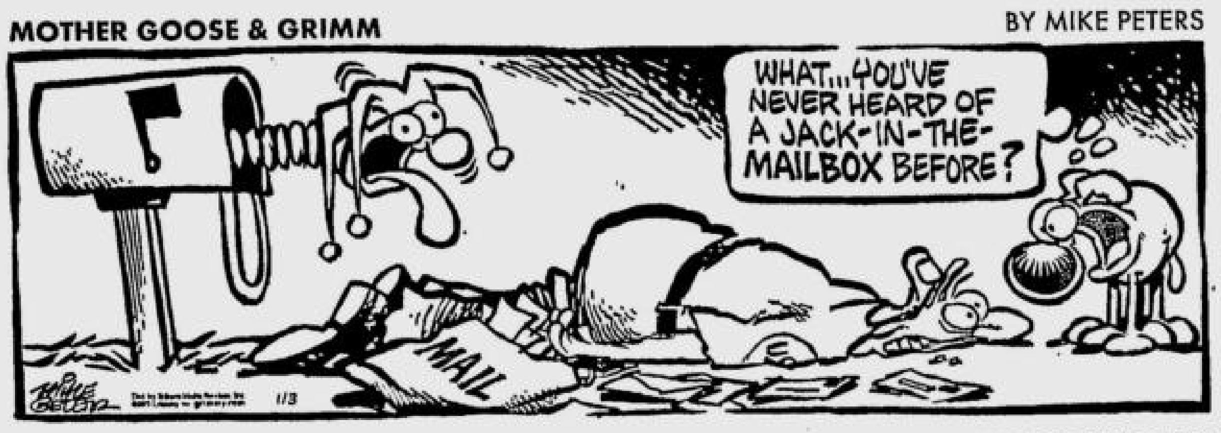
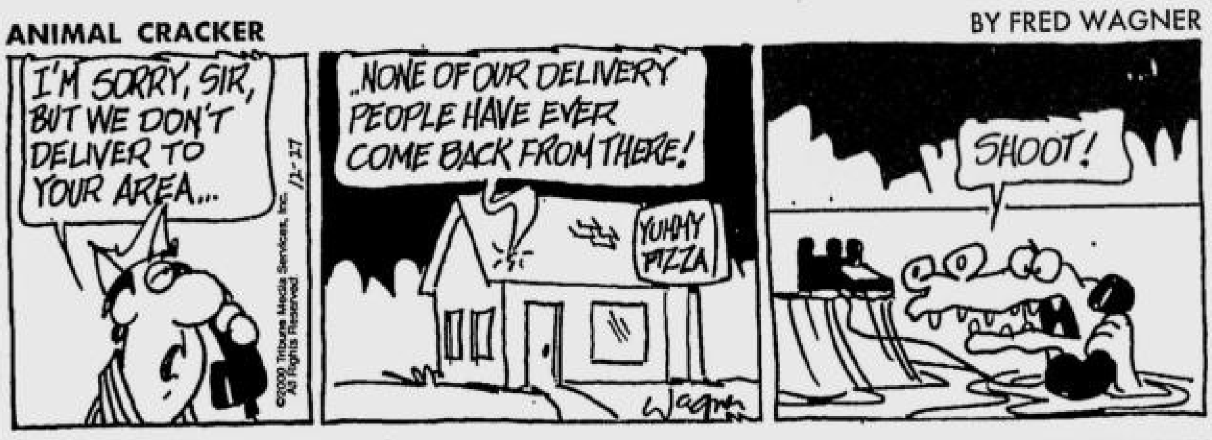
BY MIKE PETERS


WHAT... YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF A JACK-IN-THE-MAILBOX BEFORE?
MAIL
1/3

ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


I'M SORRY, SIR, BUT WE DON'T DELIVER TO YOUR AREA...
..NONE OF OUR DELIVERY PEOPLE HAVE EVER COME BACK FROM THERE!
YUMMY PIZZA
SHOOT!
12-27
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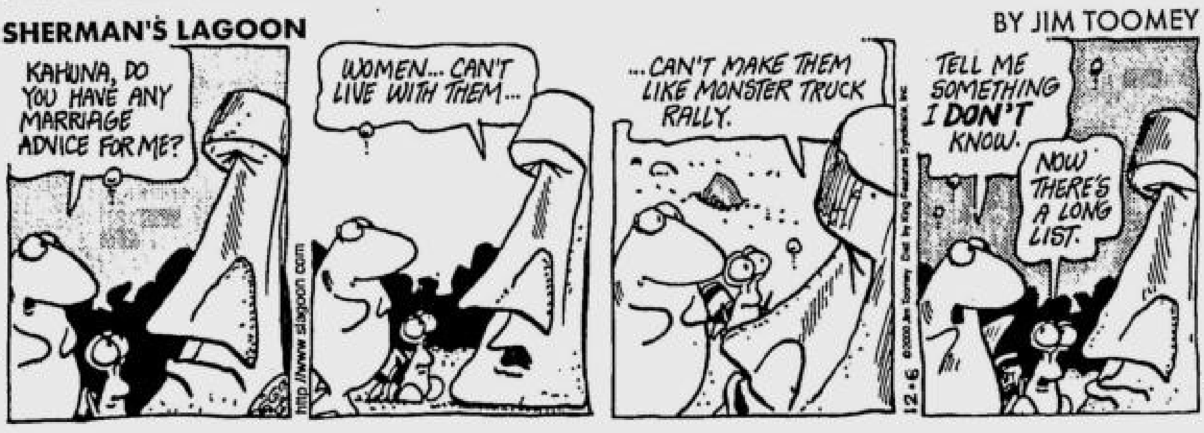
Wagner

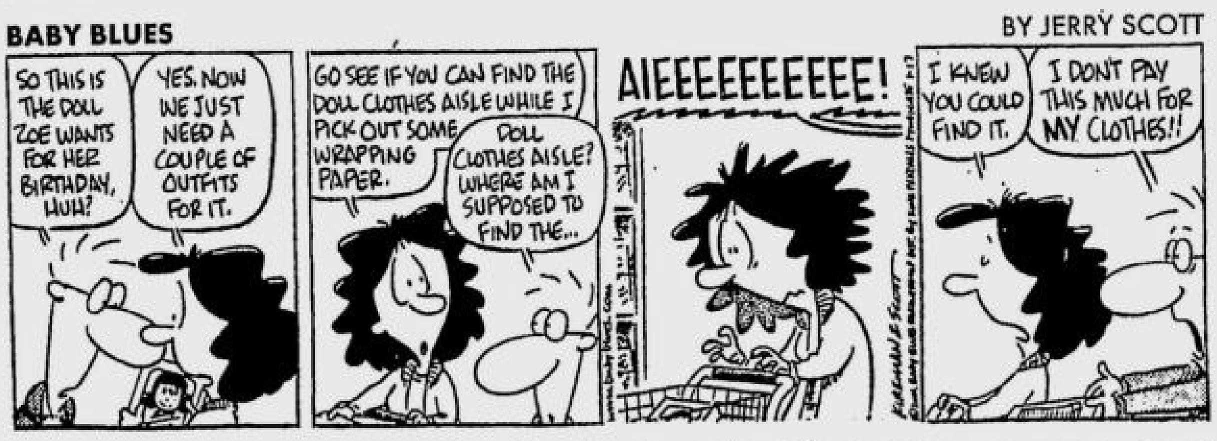
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


KAHUNA, DO YOU HAVE ANY MARRIAGE ADVICE FOR ME?
WOMEN... CAN'T LIVE WITH THEM...
...CAN'T MAKE THEM LIKE MONSTER TRUCK RALLY.
TELL ME SOMETHING I DON'T KNOW.
NOW THERE'S A LONG LIST.
http://www.slagoon.com
12-6

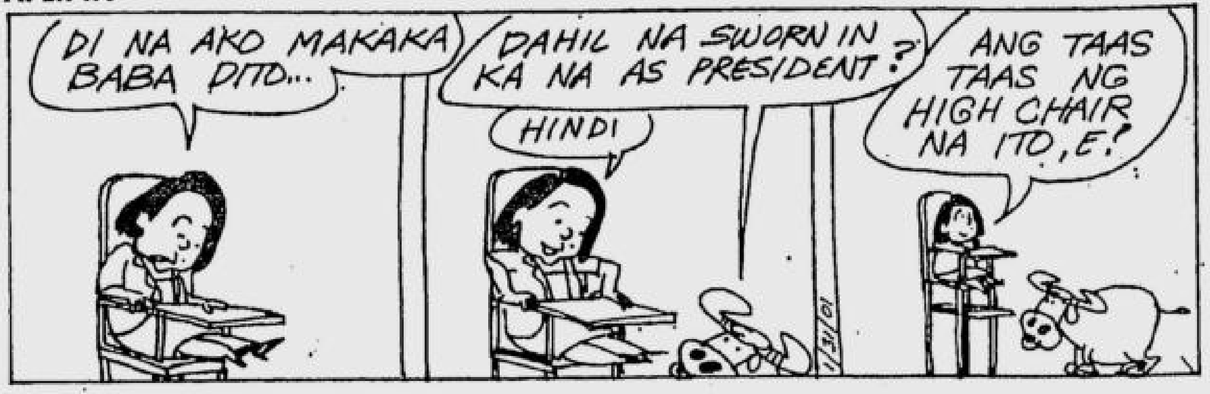
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


SO THIS IS THE DOLL ZOE WANTS FOR HER BIRTHDAY, HUH?
YES. NOW WE JUST NEED A COUPLE OF OUTFITS FOR IT.
GO SEE IF YOU CAN FIND THE DOLL CLOTHES AISLE WHILE I PICK OUT SOME WRAPPING PAPER.
DOLL CLOTHES AISLE? WHERE AM I SUPPOSED TO FIND THE...
AIEEEEEEEEEEE!
I KNEW YOU COULD FIND IT.
I DON'T PAY THIS MUCH FOR MY CLOTHES!!

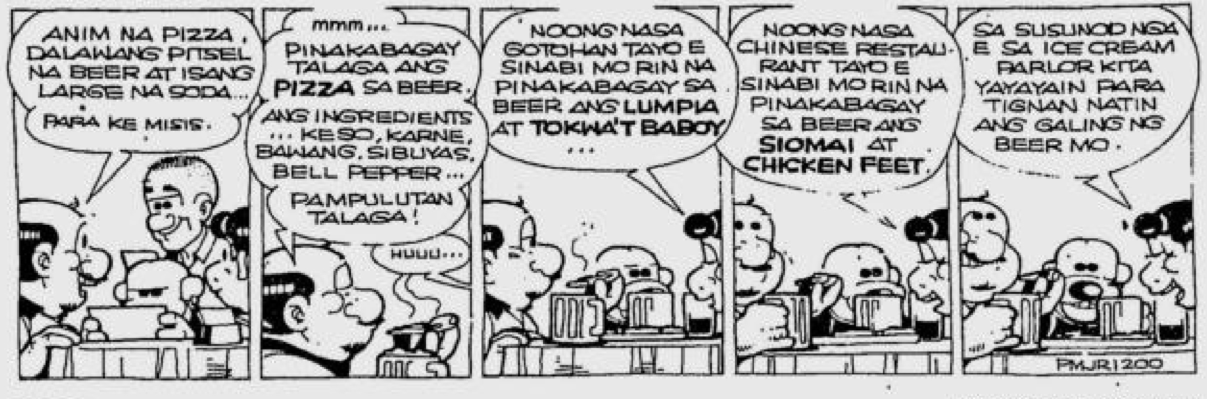
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


DI NA AKO MAKAKA BABA DITO...
DAHIL NA SWORN IN KA NA AS PRESIDENT?
HINDI
ANG TAAS TAAS NG HIGH CHAIR NA ITO, E!
1/31/01

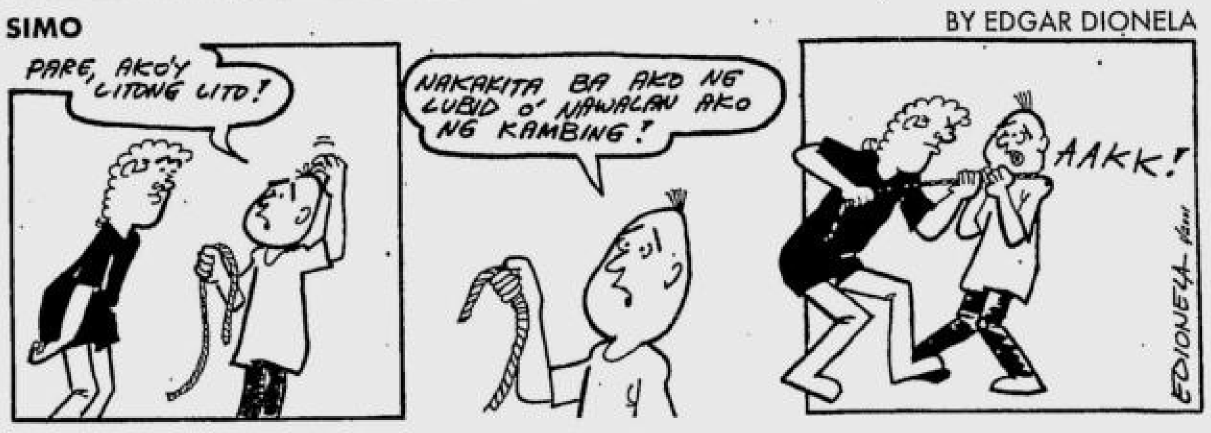
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANIM NA PIZZA, DALAWANG PITSEL NA BEER AT ISANG LARGE NA SODA...
PARA KE MISIS.
mmm...
PINAKABAGAY TALAGA ANG PIZZA SA BEER.
ANG INGREDIENTS ... KESO, KARNE, BAWANG, SIBUYAS, BELL PEPPER ...
PAMPULUTAN TALAGA!
HUUU...
NOONG NASA GOTOHAN TAYO E SINABI MO RIN NA PINAKABAGAY SA BEER ANG LUMPIA AT TOKWA'T BABOY ...
NOONG NASA CHINESE RESTAURANT TAYO E SINABI MO RIN NA PINAKABAGAY SA BEER ANG SIOMAI AT CHICKEN FEET.
SA SUSUNOD NGA E SA ICE CREAM PARLOR KITA YAYAYAIN PARA TIGNAN NATIN ANG GALING NG BEER MO.
PMJR1200

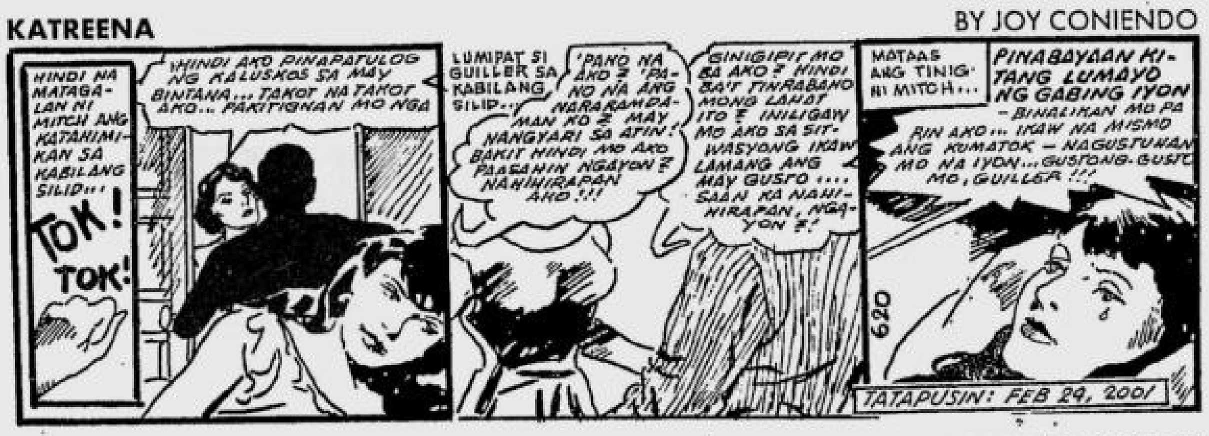
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


PARE, AKO'Y LITONG LITO!
NAKAKITA BA AKO NG LUBID O' NAWALAN AKO NG KAMBING!
AAKK!
EDIONELA

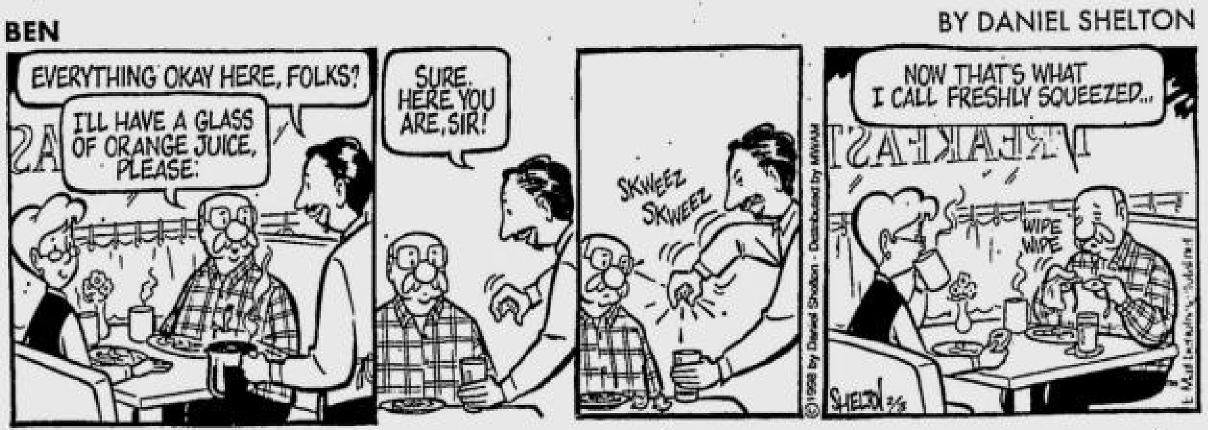
KATREENA

BY JOY CONIENDO


HINDI NA MATAGALAN NI MITCH ANG KATAHIMIKAN SA KABILANG SILID...
HINDI AKO PINAPATULOG NG KALUSKOS SA MAY BINTANA... TAKOT NA TAKOT AKO... PAKITIGNAN MO NGA
TOK! TOK!
LUMIPAT SI GUILLER SA KABILANG SILID...
'PANO NA AKO ? 'PANO NA ANG NARARAMDAMAN KO ? MAY NANGYARI SA ATIN! BAKIT HINDI MO AKO PAASAHIN NGAYON ? NAHIHIRAPAN AKO !!!
GINIGIPIT MO BA AKO ? HINDI BA'T TINRABAHO MONG LAHAT ITO ? INILIGAW MO AKO SA SITWASYONG IKAW LAMANG ANG MAY GUSTO .... SAAN KA NAHIHIRAPAN, NGAYON ?!
MATAAS ANG TINIG NI MITCH...
PINABAYAAN KITANG LUMAYO NG GABING IYON
- BINALIKAN MO PA RIN AKO... IKAW NA MISMO ANG KUMATOK - NAGUSTUHAN MO NA IYON... GUSTONG-GUSTO MO, GUILLER !!!
620
TATAPUSIN: FEB 29, 2001

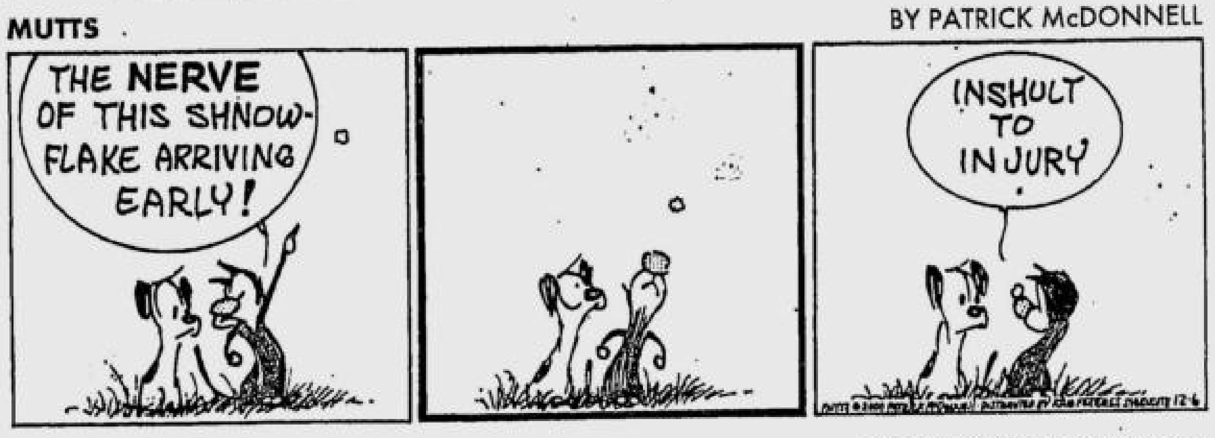
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


EVERYTHING OKAY HERE, FOLKS?
I'LL HAVE A GLASS OF ORANGE JUICE, PLEASE.
SURE. HERE YOU ARE, SIR!
SKWEEZ SKWEEZ
NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL FRESHLY SQUEEZED...
WIPE WIPE
© 1998 by Daniel Shelton - Distributed by MNWM
SHELTON

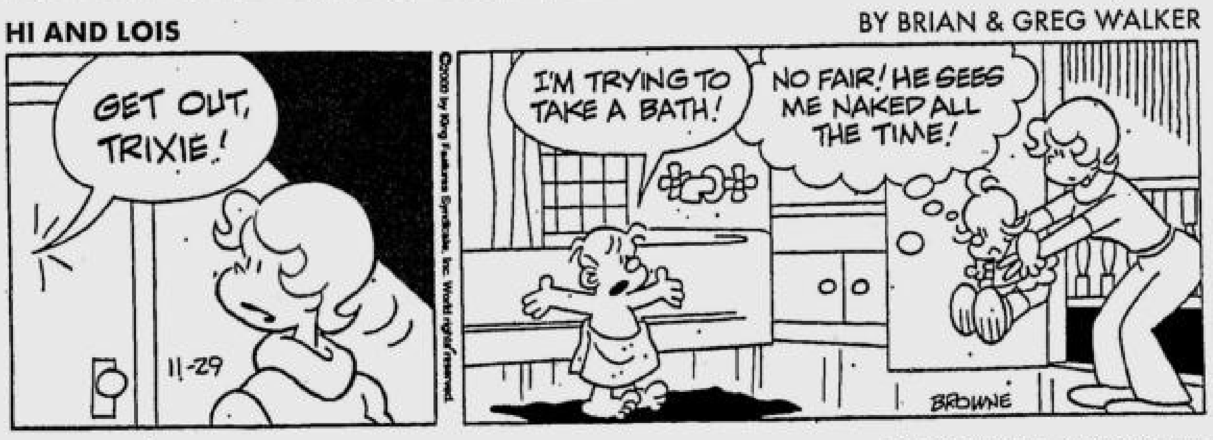
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


THE NERVE OF THIS SHNOW-FLAKE ARRIVING EARLY!
INSHULT TO INJURY
12-6

HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


GET OUT, TRIXIE!
I'M TRYING TO TAKE A BATH!
NO FAIR! HE SEES ME NAKED ALL THE TIME!
11-29
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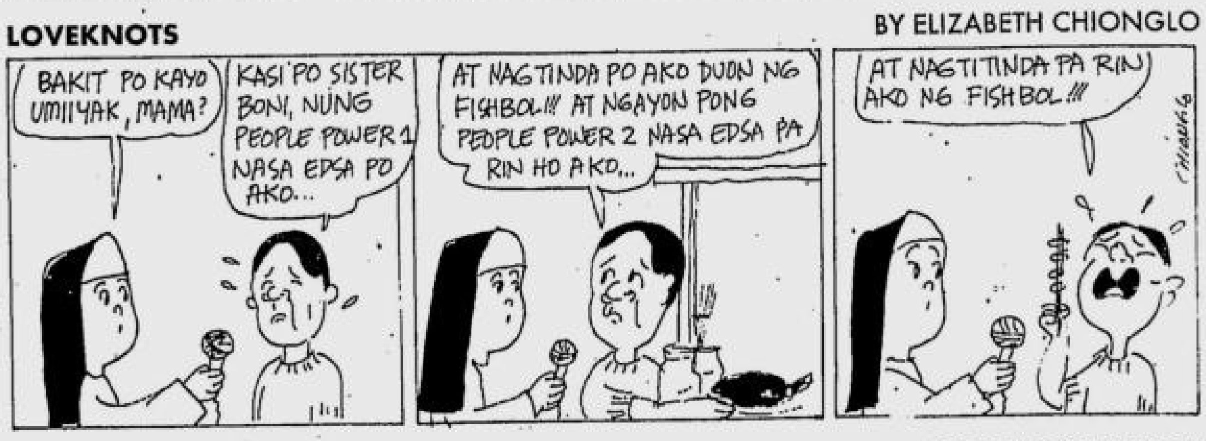
BROWNE

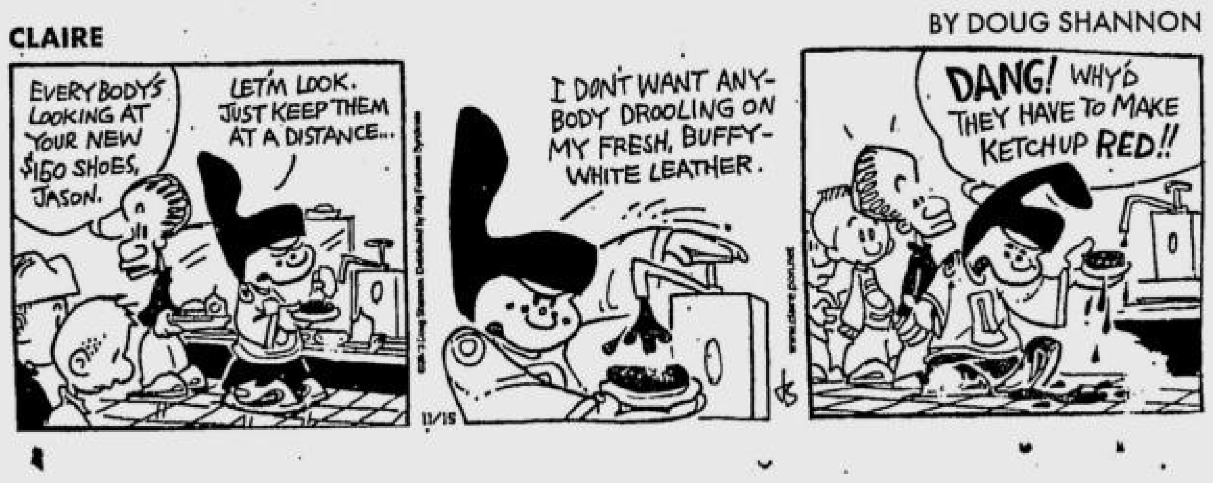
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


BAKIT PO KAYO UMIIYAK, MAMA?
KASI PO SISTER BONI, NUNG PEOPLE POWER 1 NASA EDSA PO AKO...
AT NAGTINDA PO AKO DUON NG FISHBOL!!! AT NGAYON PONG PEOPLE POWER 2 NASA EDSA PA RIN HO AKO...
AT NAGTITINDA PA RIN AKO NG FISHBOL!!!
CHIONGLO

CLAIRE

BY DOUG SHANNON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LET'M LOOK. JUST KEEP THEM AT A DISTANCE...
I DON'T WANT ANYBODY DROOLING ON MY FRESH, BUFFY-WHITE LEATHER.
DANG! WHY'D THEY HAVE TO MAKE KETCHUP RED!!
11/15

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Norman Mailer, Carol Channing, Nolan Ryan, Suzanne Pleshette, Justin Timberlake, Minnie Driver, Jean Simmons, Jackie Robinson

Happy Birthday: You will fight for a cause and stand up for the underdog this year. Your belief in doing things right will put you in a leadership position. Your determination will help you bring about the necessary changes. Let your creativity lead the way, and you will move ahead of your competition and on to a victorious year. Your numbers: 5, 13, 25, 29, 33, 37

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Behind-the-scenes activity will bring the highest and most unusual rewards. Volunteer work will open your eyes to a host of new avenues that you can stroll down.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Your ability to work in fine detail will bring approval from others. Avoid exhaustion, or minor ailments will slow you down. You must pace yourself better.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't exaggerate if you don't want to be frowned upon. Your attitudes and opinions on what you want in a mate are changing. This could cause problems in your present union.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't forget to enjoy yourself today. Remember that all work and no play isn't good for anyone. You need to find an outlet that will satisfy your needs.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Home-improvement projects should be at the top of your list. You can save yourself some money if you ask friends and family to pitch in and help. You will be satisfied with your achievements.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Your emotional life will go downhill if you continue to play both ends against the middle. Social activities will be fun, but you must not be overindulgent or too flirtatious.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Be careful whom you confide in. Someone you know may be twisting your words around. Be in the moment. Being preoccupied will lead to minor accidents.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Social events will be stimulating. You will meet someone who interests you as more than a friend. Look into activities that will help you get into tiptop shape.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You can expect to encounter conflicts regarding a legal agreement or contracts. Pass the time doing things that will be entertaining but not cost an arm and a leg.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): A love connection can be made through the company you keep. The relationship will move rather rapidly, so hold onto your hat and approach the situation with courage.

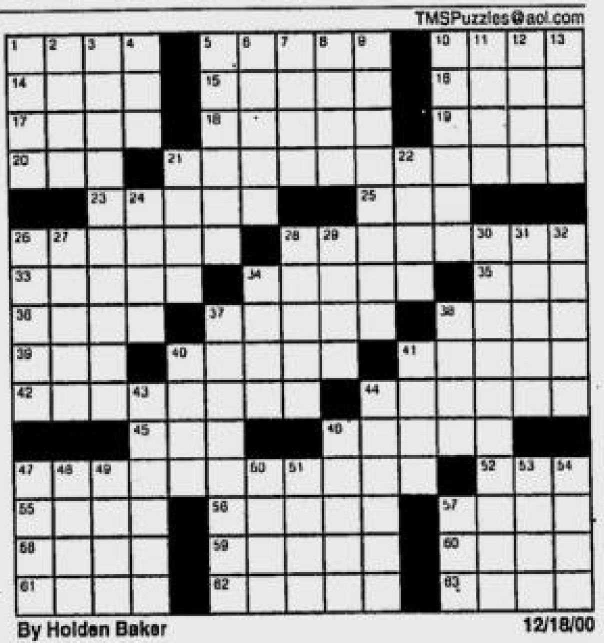
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Sit down with a good friend and toss some ideas around that pertain to making some extra money. You can probably start a business with virtually no overhead if you use the skills you already have. Consulting may be the answer.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Your energy is high, and competitive physical events will attract you. Look at investments that appear to be lucrative. Friends will introduce you to someone special.

Birthday Baby: You are cautious, strong, independent and loyal. You have a need to look out for others and will always try to do what's best for everyone. You are hardworking and will do things "just so."

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Holden Baker
Greenfield, MA

ACROSS
1 French cleric
5 Family member
10 Red planet
14 Action break
15 Derived from oil
16 Pass over
17 Antiaircraft fire
18 Legal
19 Speed contest
20 2 on the phone
21 Style display with a painful end?
23 S.S. Kregge chain
25 Cost to play
26 Hawkeyes
28 Portuguese explorer
33 "NYPD Blue" co-star
34 Two-legged support
35 __-Wan Kenobi
36 Spartan queen
37 __ and dined
38 Kentucky fort
39 Hot dog's problem?
40 Cheapskate
41 Fluid transition
42 Doc, slangily
44 Crevices
45 Voluminous ref. source
46 Solo
47 Extra draft protection with a painful end?
52 Young boy
55 John Dickson or Vikki
56 Don or Samuel
57 Col. Mustard's game
58 In addition
59 Actress Taylor
60 Be an omen of
61 Explode
62 James and Dizzy
63 Take a dip

DOWN
1 __-Romeo
2 Future tulip
3 Spider with a painful end?
4 Wapiti
5 Grinding teeth
6 Top social category
7 Garage worker, briefly
8 1003
9 Natural disaster
10 Tasty tidbit
11 Oriental nursemaid
12 Puerto __
13 Slumgullion
21 Supporters
22 Necessity
24 __ Hari
26 Atolls
27 Symbol meaning last
28 Collieries
29 Copycat
30 Poet with a painful end?
31 Approximately
32 Vetoes
34 Two-wheeler
37 Not on the lee side
38 Peachy follower?
40 Ode or sonnet
41 Apply the brakes
43 Take out a loan
44 Terminates
46 Madison Ave. types
47 Wound cover
48 Like many a tale
49 Words of approximation
50 __ fixe
51 "Peter Pan" dog
53 Car on the Autobahn
54 Consider
57 Nat. network

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

E	T	R	U	S	C	A	N	■	A	D	D	S	U	P
L	E	O	N	A	R	D	O	■	L	I	A	I	S	E
K	N	O	B	B	I	E	R	■	C	A	L	D	E	R
E	S	T	E	E	M	S	■	N	O	S	I	E	S	T
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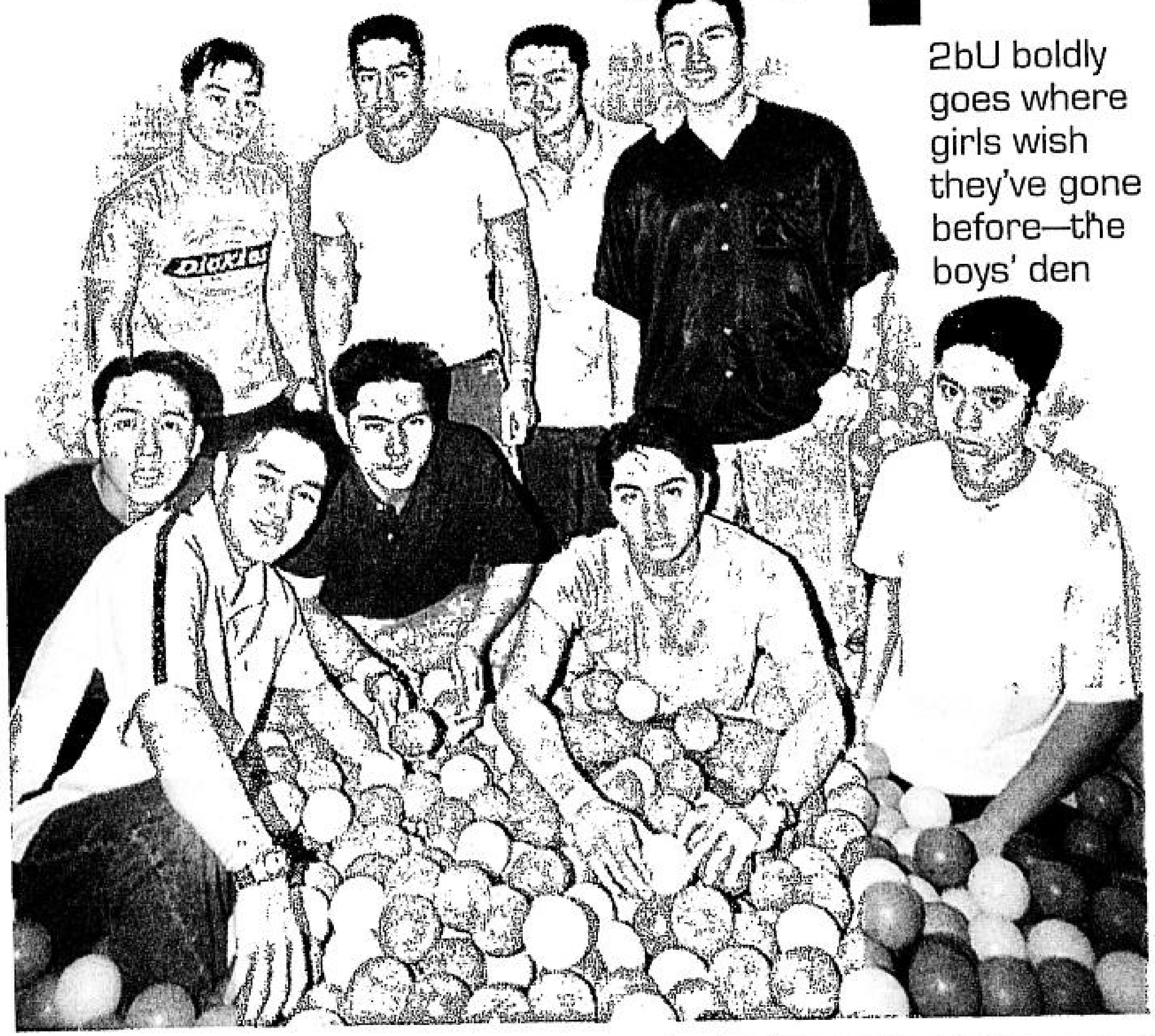

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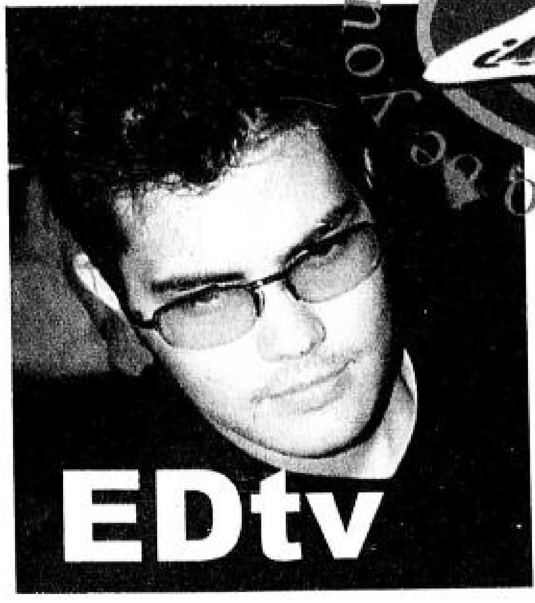

(Story on page D6)

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What boys want

(Story on page D4)

Big Mac of collegiate basketball

(Story on page D2)

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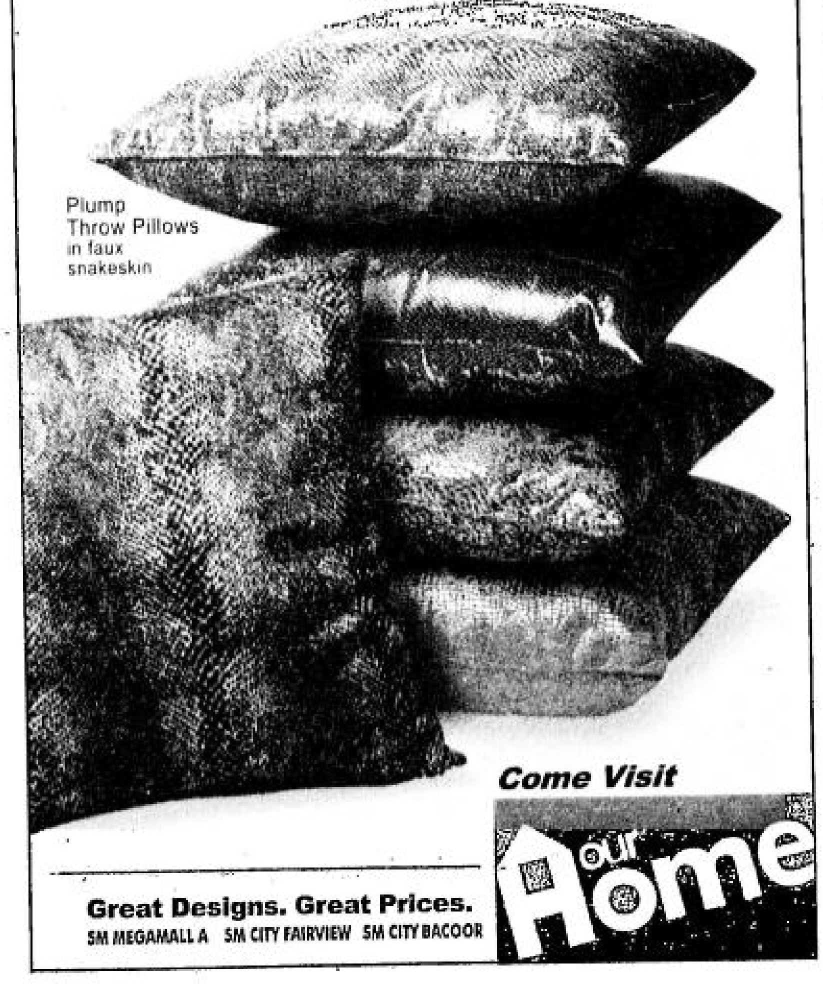

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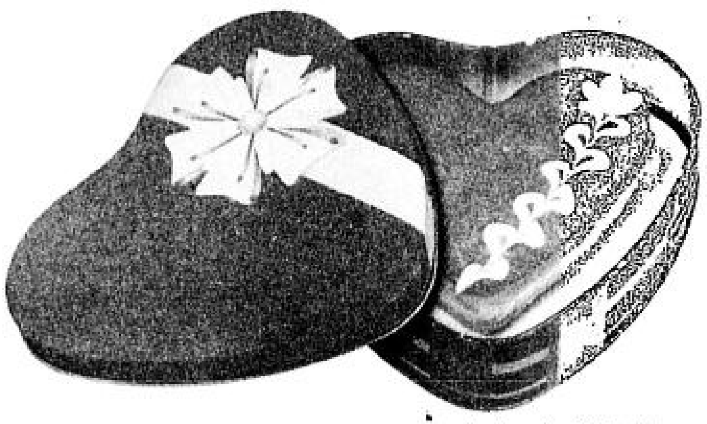

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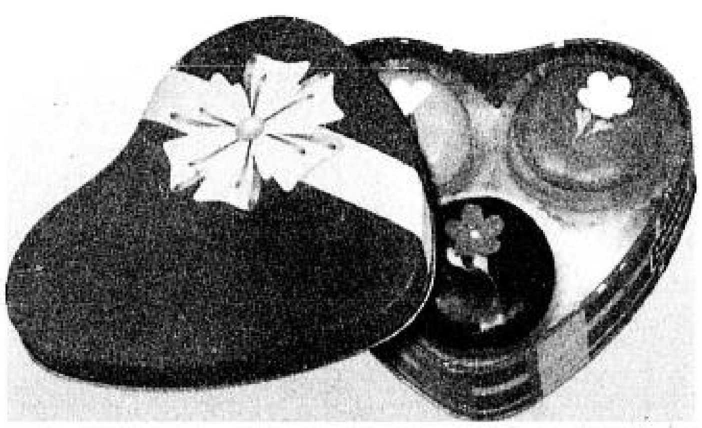

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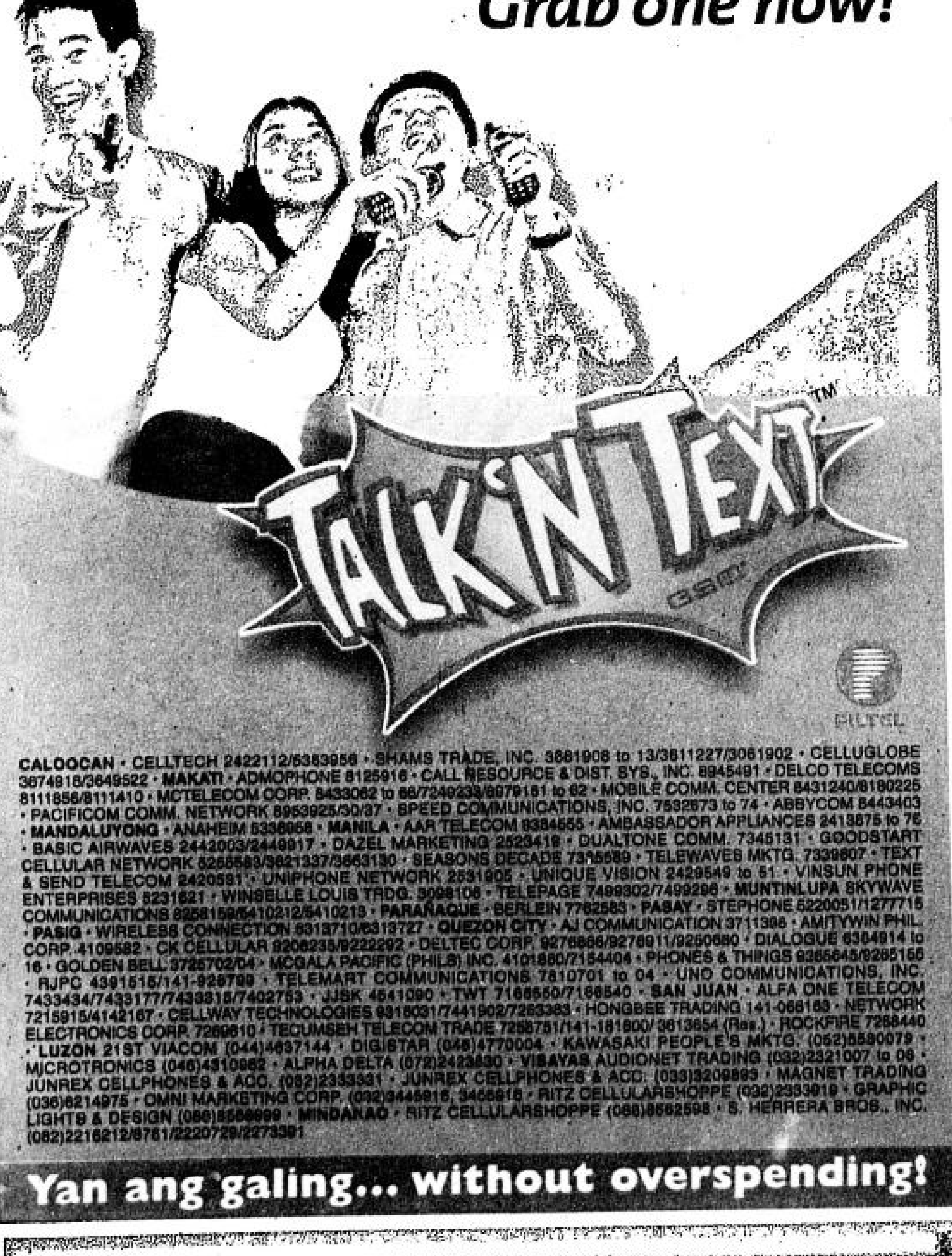

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Yan ang galing... without overspending!

Big Mac of collegiate basketball

By Jules Alcantara

FONDLY called Mac (after Ronald McDonald who, like him, is known for big feet), De La Salle University's premiere point guard Ronald Cuan has just finished his playing years in the UAAP. Currently playing in the PBL (for Osaka Iridology) and finishing his thesis on sports development in the country, the usually shy and quiet Green Archer was in the mood to talk one Sunday afternoon.

Initially, I had qualms about interviewing Cuan. Basketball players are all cut from the same cloth, I thought. The same story, the same trite lines, the same perks. It didn't help at all that he was such a looker that I could not help but assume he typified the "dumb jock" syndrome. With that in mind, I really did not think a conversation with a basketball player would be such a rich source of insight, not to mention the overused cliché, hard work. Yup, the 5'11" development studies major used the phrase "hard work" so many times that I began to think that it was part of some mantra that he chants every morning.

Well, anyway, the avowed Superman fanatic held me captive. I could hardly get a word in edgewise as he talked and talked the whole afternoon. Okay, so maybe my preconceived notions were proven a bit off kilter as I discovered during our conversation.

Just for the (basketball) record

Mac's fascination for the game began when he was 7. "I guess it started when I saw my neighbors playing basketball. Before I knew it, I was playing basketball all the time, *kahit alas-dose ng tanghali*," he says.

Mac's basketball career officially started when he joined the mini-midget division in Claret School back in fourth grade. He became a member of the high school varsity team only on his second year, a fact that he is quite proud of considering that only juniors were supposed to be accepted. He wasn't part of the starting five back then, but he "finished the game." As the youngest in the team, he led his school to two championships in the Philippine Athletic Association and even received awards such as Mythical Five and MVP. Curiously, his team won over La Salle Greenhils, where his future teammate Francis Zamora played.

Albeit no one in his family was an athlete of any kind, his father was (and still is) a basketball fanatic. His parents try to watch all his games and every game is recorded for posterity. He credits his playmates as his first mentors. From then coaches like Lito and Jun Mina and Bong Zaleta took care of educating him on the basics and fundamentals of basketball. Jong Uichico and Franz Pumaren helped mold him into becoming a top point guard in the UAAP.

Early on, he knew that basketball was a tall man's game. He read up on how to improve his vertical jumps and did stretching exercises to increase his height. He would wake up at 4 a.m., strap weights to his ankle (to make his jump higher) and jog alone from his house to the Quezon City Memorial Circle.

Early on, he already had a clear grasp of his limitations. He knew he wasn't a "born athlete." He knew he had to exert greater effort in order to pursue his dream and excel in the game. That's an amazing sense of self-awareness considering that he was only 11 at that time.

Green dream

Mac decided to enter De La Salle University because he wanted "to get a good education, at the same time, I was really a big fan of their basketball team." Again, on his own volition (and I surmise, audacity), Mac bravely tried out for the team. He tried out as early as February 1996 but got cut. After a month he came back upon hearing that coach Jong Uichico had taken over the job. "I would hear other players talk behind my back. *Ang kapal daw ng mukha ko* to keep on going back, that I was *makulit*. But they didn't know that it was Coach who kept on asking me back," he says with a laugh.

Mac pushed himself harder despite the fact that the other players obviously disliked him. "But I decided that they were not going to be the reason for me not to pursue my dream."

So was there discrimination at not being a "recruit"? "I would say (so) in the beginning," he replies with honesty. "It's so hard to get into any team. That's why when you're a recruit, you're highly regarded," he adds.

But then again, Mac is "proud to say that I tried out for the team. Usually those who make it to the tryouts end up in the training team *lang*." As far as he can recall, it was only him that made it to the main 16-man team, which by the way is usually reserved for recruits. "So from trying out, I went to the training team, then became second point guard to starting point guard," he says.

When I asked him the date of his first UAAP game, he readily knew the answer—July 14, 1997. He entered the basketball arena during the last 10 minutes of the first half to relieve Dino Aldeguer who was already in foul trouble. He did nothing grand (in fact only scored one point) but it was that moment when it dawned on him that he was on his way to fulfill his dream of playing basketball professionally.

Finish the game

The quiet Green Archer says that he hasn't exactly created waves. Nor is he ever surrounded by media hype. At this point in the interview, I prepared myself for what looked like an impending sob story. But I was taken aback when he sincerely pronounced that he prefers it to be that way. Like a good soldier, he says he enters the basketball arena with two things in mind—to finish the game and make the team win.

In basketball, being part of the starting five is a source of pride. But Mac prefers to acquire his badge of honor by "finishing the game especially when the team is on the line and the scores are too close." In the 1999 UAAP season, Dino Aldeguer's three-point shot led to an overtime against UST. During the overtime, DLSU led by only a point. With only five seconds to go, Mac made the crucial free throw, which secured the Green Archer's victory.

In last year's championship game, together with superstar Renren Ritualo, they placed the nail on the coffin as they delivered the last of the crucial free throws that spelled the third consecutive championship for the Green Archers.

Does it bother him that he seems underrated and his solid performance as a point guard has gone relatively unheralded? "It's a disadvantage because eventually when I turn pro, some people may not know me. It's an advantage since everything I do above what people expect me to do is considered an achievement," he says with a grin. No way but up, he adds.

Teammates

Summer of year 2000 "was hell" for the team. Mac and his teammates practiced so hard that "*kulang na lang magpawis kami ng dugo*." He admits that they were not exactly overflowing with talent and the team even ranked fourth. "But that served as a challenge for us," he says. What they lacked in talent, they made up for through sheer hard work and dedication.

> Through dint of hard work and without media hype, Ronald Cuan has become the premiere point guard of the UAAP

In the crucial stage during the conference, Ritualo's finger got entangled in Mac's jersey during one a practice and got injured. "Everyone had to step up, work harder, to fill the hole that Renren left," he says, still feeling bad that he inadvertently caused Ritualo's injury which absented Ritual from five games in the conference.

To hear Mac talk about his teammates is quite a delight. Mac considers Mon Jose and Alvin Castro as his posse even off the court. He says if there is one person he really admires in the team, it is team captain Mon Jose. "Every one says he's just average, he's not athletic. But he makes up for that with a lot of hard work, his hustle, discipline. His intensity is the same from beginning to end and I have never seen him waver in the five years that we have been together," he says. He also adds that Mon has always led by example.

The entrance of his co-point guard, Fil-Am Mike Cortez, served as an impetus for Mac's game. Very different in playing style—Mike is flashy and stylish while Mac is fundamental and basic—the two complemented each other. Initially, he admits to being a bit threatened, but later on he says Mike even helped him become a better player.

It seems that a mutual admiration society has formed between the two point guards. Mike Cortez has always been vocal in giving Mac credit for helping him out in adjusting his game. Mac shrugs and makes no big deal about it—it was just something he had to do as a senior in the team. In fact, Mac declares Mike is a very talented player. "What he showed last season does not even scratch the surface of what he can still do. And that's scary!" he adds proudly.

I could not help but ask Mac whether he minds that Mike has garnered awards and has gotten a lot of media mileage. He explains that as he entered that conference his main perspective was that he didn't want to graduate a loser. "I have always wanted team honor more than individual awards. It doesn't matter who gets what as long as we win," he says with utmost sincerity.

Perks and sacrifices

Mac does not subscribe to the notion that players are given special treatment. In hindsight, things did not come Mac's way easily. Case in point: some time ago, he nearly got kicked out because his grades were not faring well. Even though he worked hard at his thesis as much as his group mates did, he still flunked. It was automatically assumed that since he was a player, it meant that he didn't give it as much effort.

The rumors that the Green Archers are a bunch of spoiled athletes are simply not true according to him. In fact, it was only on his last playing year that he finally was granted a full scholarship. He didn't mind for he knew that his alma mater had obligations and recruits were promised certain things that they had to deliver. "I love what I'm doing. I didn't join the team *naman* to get a scholarship. It's an honor to be part of the team, but it doesn't give me the right to abuse it," he says resolutely.

Basketball meant that he had virtually a non-existent social life. He had a hard time balancing family life, studies, the game and his personal relationships. At some point, his game suffered. "I cannot let go of my family, I wanted a college degree, basketball has always been my dream," he says. Something had to give and after some thinking, he decided to sacrifice his personal relationships.

Did he also have to sacrifice having a good education since he spent much more time in the basketball court than the classroom? "I am not an A1 student okay, but I went to my classes. I learned as much as I could," he says. He is confident that his need for a good education has not been shortchanged by his dream of playing basketball. In fact, he is not scared of not finding a job in case he does not end up playing professionally. "Remember, I entered DLSU to primarily get a good education. Being part of the team came only after," he says.

Players as playboys?

Players have always been reputed to be players even off the court. And why not? They're considered campus figures and sex symbols. Mac does not seem to mind that total strangers text him or that he gets both cheers and jeers while playing. On and off court, he has acquired the talent of zoning out. In fact, he says all the attention is given to him only because he's a basketball player and nothing else.

Recently, Mac was the subject of nasty rumors on Pinoyexchange. According to the rumor, he offered somebody to have a one-night stand. Although that particular "thread" in PEX has already been closed, he still "felt bad that people put words in my mouth." Indeed, it was no-win situation for him since regardless of how he reacts to all the accusations, he will still come out bad. It is quite "illogical," he says, for him to ask someone for a one-night stand. "That would be weird and awkward '*di ba*? It's something that just happens naturally!" he exclaims, frustration clearly written over his face. He wishes that people would be a bit more considerate. Mac has worked so hard that he is just too much of a pragmatic to "jeopardize" everything for something so fleeting.

"I'm not saying *na santo ako*. I'm not saying I don't know how to 'play,'" he says. But he explains he cannot own up to something that he did not commit.

Now that his playing years in the UAAP are over and he is about to graduate, Mac says it may be time for a girlfriend. He wants someone who can talk to him about basketball, politics, movies, issues, virtually anything under the sun. "So calling all sensible, intelligent, tall mestizas," he says jokingly.

Game plan

Number 1 on Mac's game plan is to finish his studies and further hone his game. He received offers from PBA and MBA teams as early as last year, but he declined. He didn't want to shortchange whatever team he was going to join. One more year in the PBL and then he is most probably going to apply for draft by early next year. "But only when I feel that I am ready," he adds.

Mac says that his greatest fear is falling short of expectations after working so hard. It is doubtful that he would let himself fall into the trap of rushing himself in pursuit of his dream. The recent invasion of Fil-Am players in both the professional and amateur leagues does not threaten this homegrown talent. He believes that all things become equal on the playing field as long as one is dedicated to one's craft and is disciplined. "As long as *maganda ang pinapakita mo*, regardless of where you come from, you will be fielded. All coaches want to win, remember that," he says.

I asked Mac what was it about him that makes him different from all the other aspiring point guards. "The desire. I refuse to give up. I may not be as talented as they are but I'm willing to work hard in order to match them or even do better."

Unlike Superman, Mac certainly does not have superior abilities or extraordinary skills. But just like his idol, he does know where he's going. And oh, boy, there's just simply no telling how far he can go.

E-mail the author at jules26@gurlmail.com

Help my lovesick pal

DEAR Caloy & September,

Since breaking up with his girl about a year ago, my friend Mel has been going out with me and my best friend Ria, who is really beautiful. After going out with us for sometime, he confessed to me that he was falling for my best friend. He could not tell her about his feelings because Ria has a long-distance relationship. He told me that the exact same situation had happened to him with another girl years ago, until the girl married his best friend. Now, he feels "emotionally sick" and wants to stay away from the group. To add to his troubles, Dana, one of our friends, likes Mel and has been doing everything just to be noticed by him. But he doesn't really like Dana. What should he do?

I have been intellectually and emotionally affected by what has happened. I'm worried about the group. Please help me help my friend.

M.D.

September Mahino & Carlos Garchitorena

It's definitely not easy to fall for someone who's already committed to someone else (okaaay...I'm not gonna cry). You won't just feel sick emotionally but you will literally feel sick all over. If your friend wants to distance himself from Ria, I think you should let him because it is he who has the problem. Maybe he knows how to deal with his pain. Forget about the state of the group; what's more important is that your friend heals himself from the sting of unrequited love.

As for Dana, it would also be up to Mel to tell her off. That is if he has noticed her amidst his lovelorn cloud. If he's oblivious of her, maybe you can tell Dana (gently, of course) that she is setting herself up for heartbreak. Or maybe she already knows it but she's on denial. Anyway, I think distance would be the best thing for your friend. And time. He might eventually forget Ria and Dana might eventually forget him and everyone would live happily ever after. Or maybe not.

I hope your group ends up still friends with one another. Good luck.

SEP

The patient (Mel) suffers from a chronic case of "*desiderium in perpetua*" wherein he always sets himself up for liking a girl (Ria) whom he knows is already taken and hence can never have. It is no surprise that his sickness is compounded by an acute guilt complex. He cannot bring himself to act normally around the group because, and I quote the Book of Blarmey, "He who mouths the forbidden fruit has fruitjuice-lips" (loose translation).

If Dana liked Mel first (with *corazòn loco* Mel spurning *pobre sita* Dana and instead going for la bella Ria), then the cause of his illness is Karma. It has happened before. Let me bring out the Book of Blarmey again, "When a woman throws [her]self at [y]our feet, heed her, and let her torn knees go not for naught."

Recommendations: (to Dana) Get a boyfriend. Sure-fire way to get Mel's attention. (To Mel): Soak problems in alcohol for 48 hours. Hang tears out to dry. Get a pet Maya or canary and learn to love beauty from a distance. (To Ria): Send to me CV with picture and (if applicable) area of concentration.

DOCTOR "GARCH" LUVE

E-mail lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

UST sets big street party

AS PART of its 390th anniversary celebration, the University of Santo Tomas will hold its first-ever "street party" dubbed "Best of the Best 2001" on Feb. 2, at the Benavides Plaza in front of the historic UST Main Building.

The street party will jumpstart the 10-year countdown to UST's quadricentennial founding anniversary in 2011. It will also be UST's victory celebration for its successful participation during the recent People Power 2 revolution.

One of the first schools to call for the resignation of deposed President Joseph Estrada, UST was an active participant in anti-Estrada rallies, sending thousands of Thomasians to the Edsa Shrine at the height of People Power 2.

Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin will be the main celebrate of the University's Thanksgiving Mass at 5 p.m.

The street party, which will start at 6 p.m., will showcase UST's finest performers in a show guaranteed to rock the entire University belt. Guest performers include Parliament Syndicate, K-24/7, Rest of the Boys, and Jamie Rivera.

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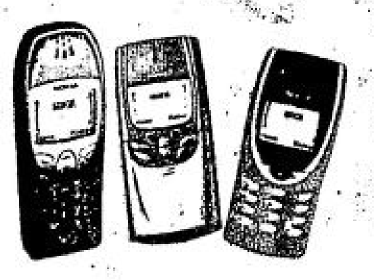

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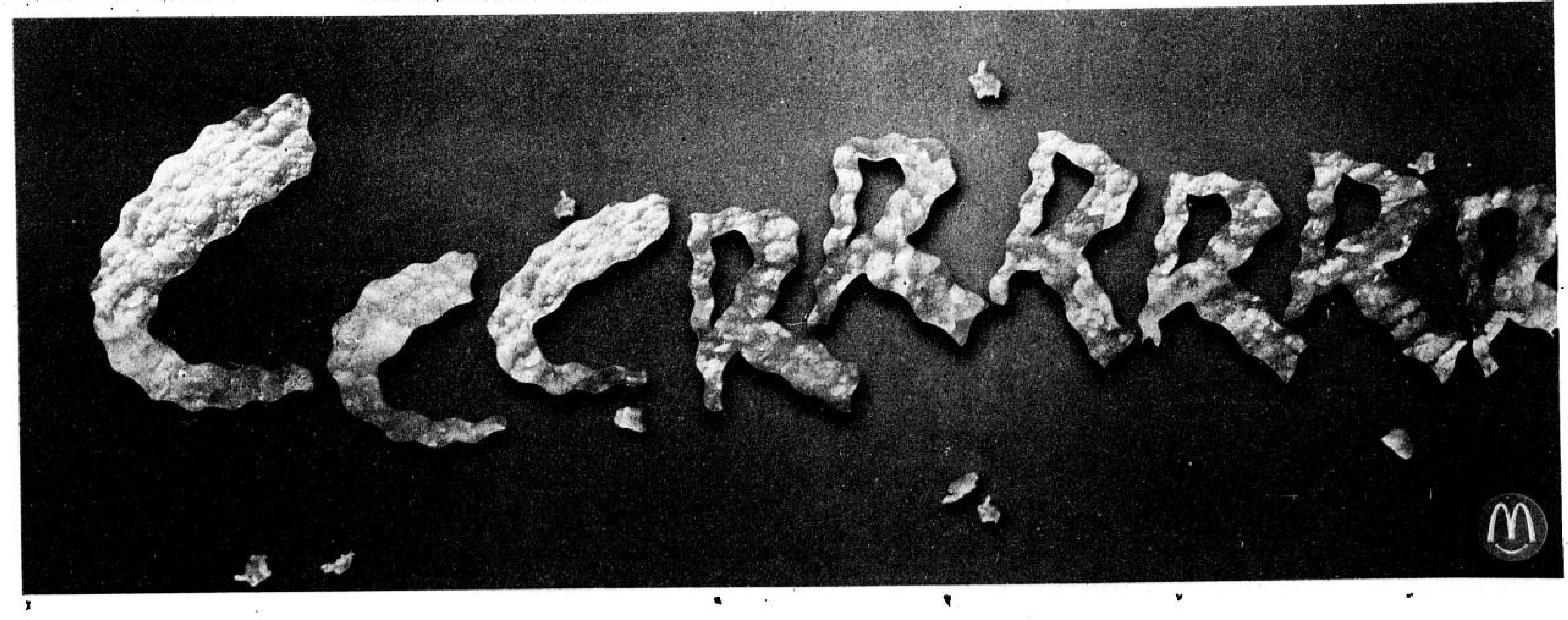
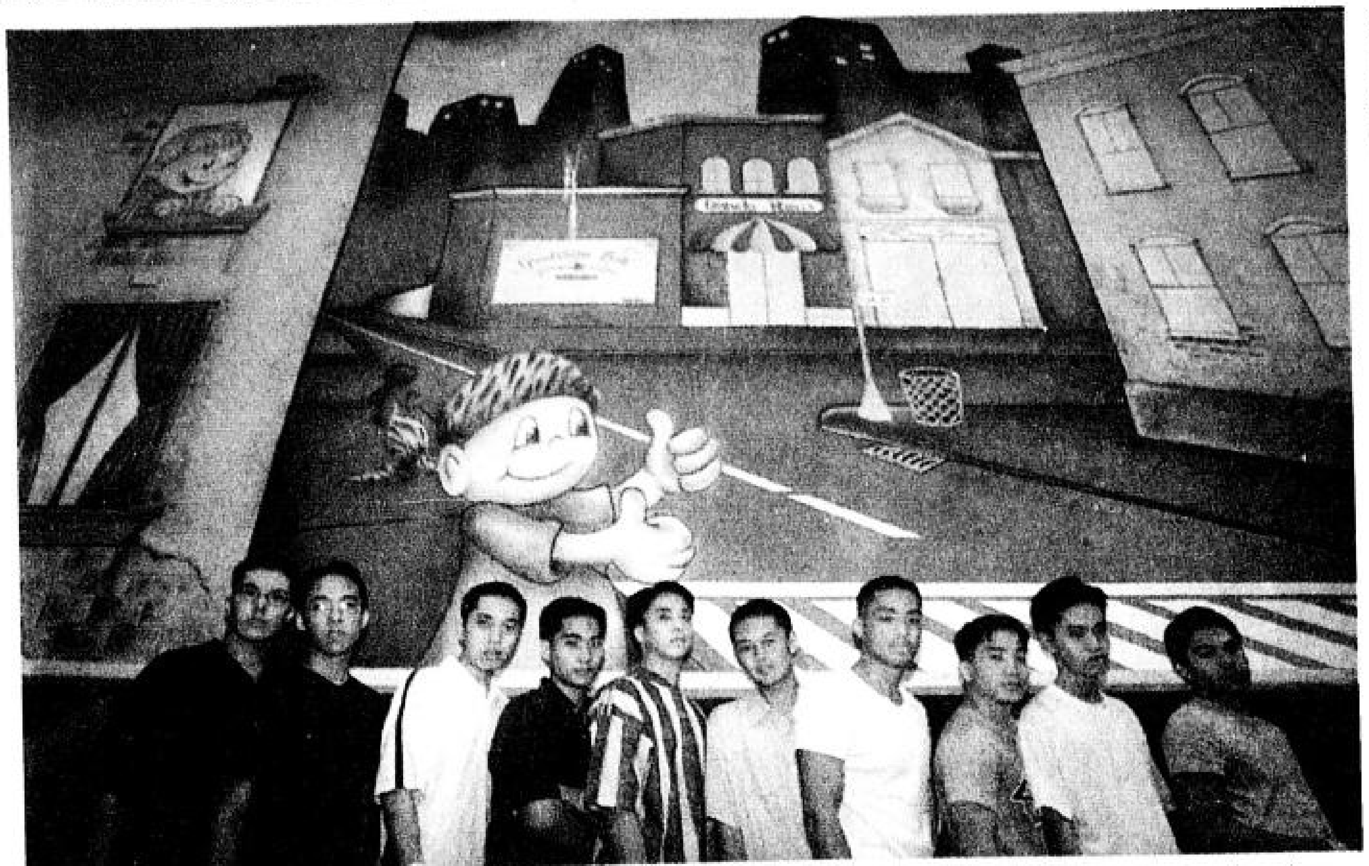
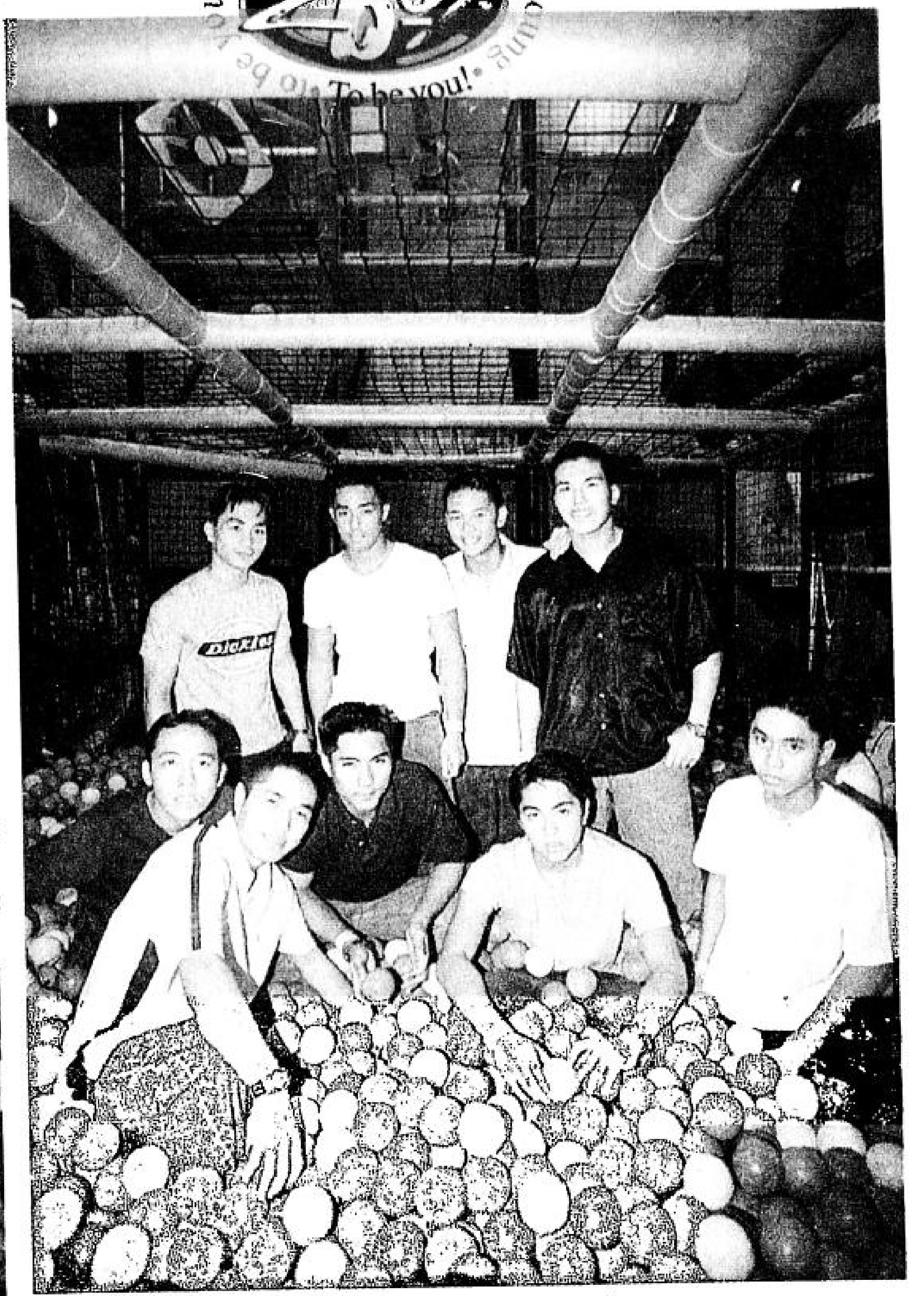




BONA Fide students and certified heartthrobs. (From left) Santi, Javy, Cyril, Ramon, Ryan, Miguel, Liam, Paulino, Jonathan and Joleon



TAKE your pick.

What boys want

Ten campus heartthrobs spend an afternoon of fun and camaraderie with 2bU!

BARELY two weeks ago, the 2bU! correspondents spent a day at Kids at Work in Glorietta with 10 of Manila's campus heartthrobs. The 10 spent hours playing with the little kids, diving into the ball pool and starting a mini-war, jumping up and down the trampoline and clowning around in their Lee Jeans. The afternoon led us to one conclusion: Boys would never grow up.

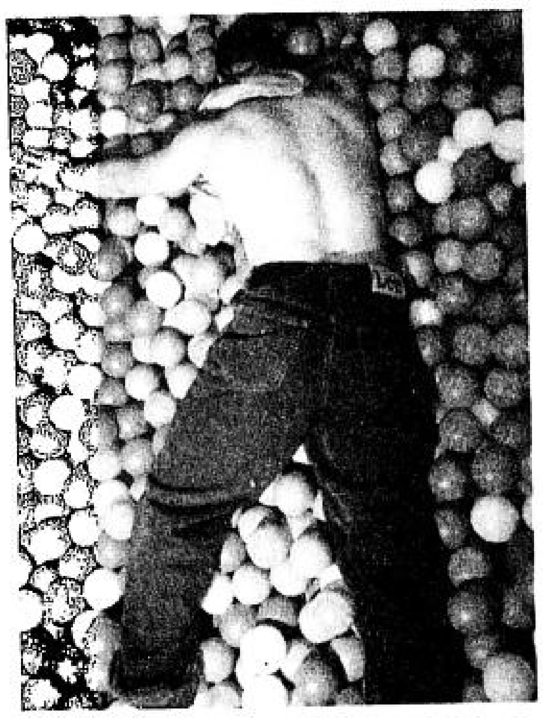
Sixteen-year-old Jonathan Laguitao is a junior from Xavier School. Jon spends his time swimming, playing the guitar, going out with friends and listening to music. He likes girls who are outgoing, sweet, talkative and fun to be with. Plus, he says, "She has to be funny."

Cyril Manadlang is 19 and a third year BS Management student from the Ateneo de Manila. He ticks off his list of must-have qualities in girls: great personality, good sense of humor, clear skin, nice smile and mesmerizing eyes. Cyril likes playing basketball, working out and hanging out with his friends and girlfriend.

An integrated marketing communications junior from the University of Asia & the Pacific, 20-year-old Jose Miguel S. Santos also works as a DJ at the Hive 100.3. He wants his girl to be intelligent ("intellectually engaging," as he put it), funny and with an interesting personality.

A certified beach bum, 18-year-old Jose Leonardo Tañada is a high school senior from Ateneo. Girls who dress well and are nice and sociable are sure to catch Joleon's eye.

Sixteen-year-old Marc Santi Chua Yuquico is a junior from Xavier. Fun-loving Santi likes playing tennis, going out with his friends, eating, sleeping and listening to music. He likes girls who are open-minded, sweet, smart, sensible and are fun to be with.



GUESS who.

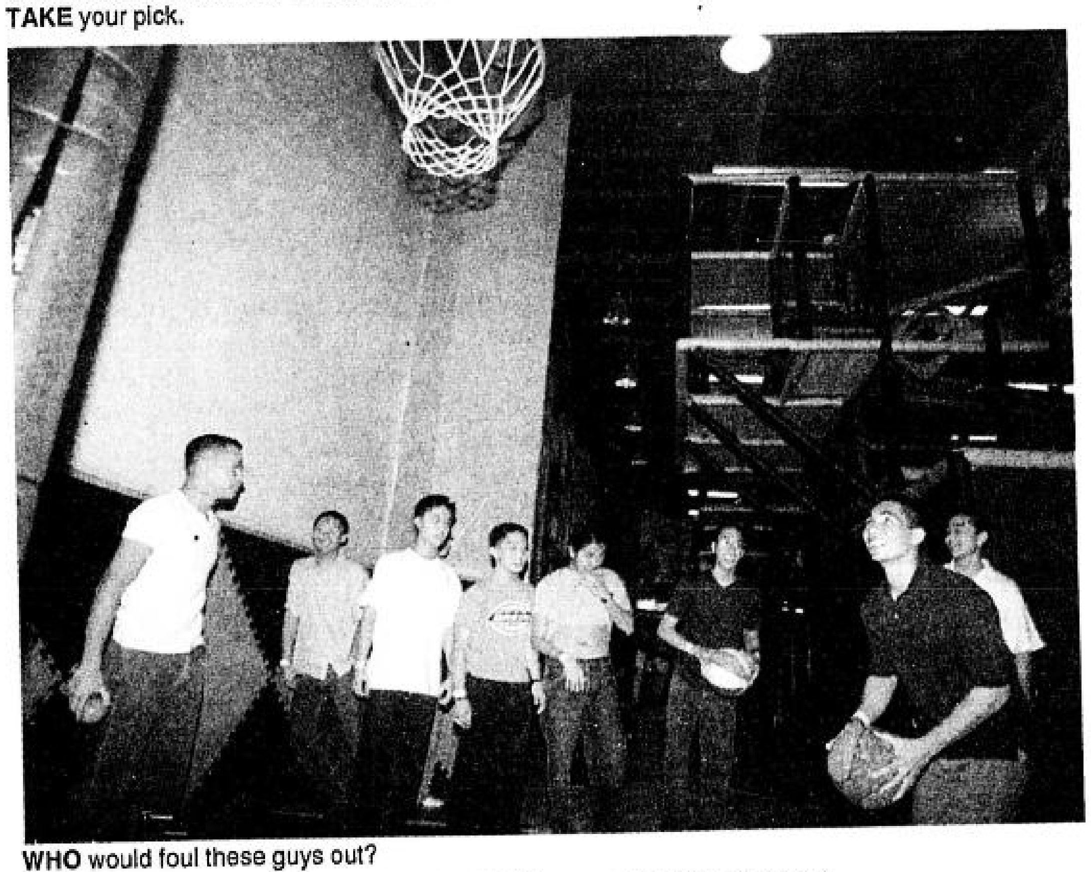
Juan Javier T. Moreno is a communication arts freshman from Ateneo. Javy likes reading, writing, going to the beach and swimming. This 18-year-old likes sweet, nice girls who can "carry a conversation." He hates airheads.

A 19-year-old liberal arts freshman from the University of Asia & the Pacific, Paulino Chan Servado III enjoys soccer, photography and playing the drums. Multitalented Paulino likes girls who are opinionated, open-minded, outgoing, intelligent and can carry themselves well.

Ramon Ortiz-Luis is a BS Management junior from the Ateneo de Manila. This 19-year-old describes his ideal girl as "someone with the sweetest smile, caring eyes, understanding, supportive and liberal-minded." Ramon likes going to the gym, playing basketball and hanging out with his girlfriend.

Twenty-one-year-old Liam David Basye Capati is a junior from the University of Asia & the Pacific. He is taking up integrated marketing communications. He likes girls who are open-minded, caring and have an interesting personality. Liam spends his time playing soccer, reading, watching the news and going on out-of-town trips. He is also into computer gaming.

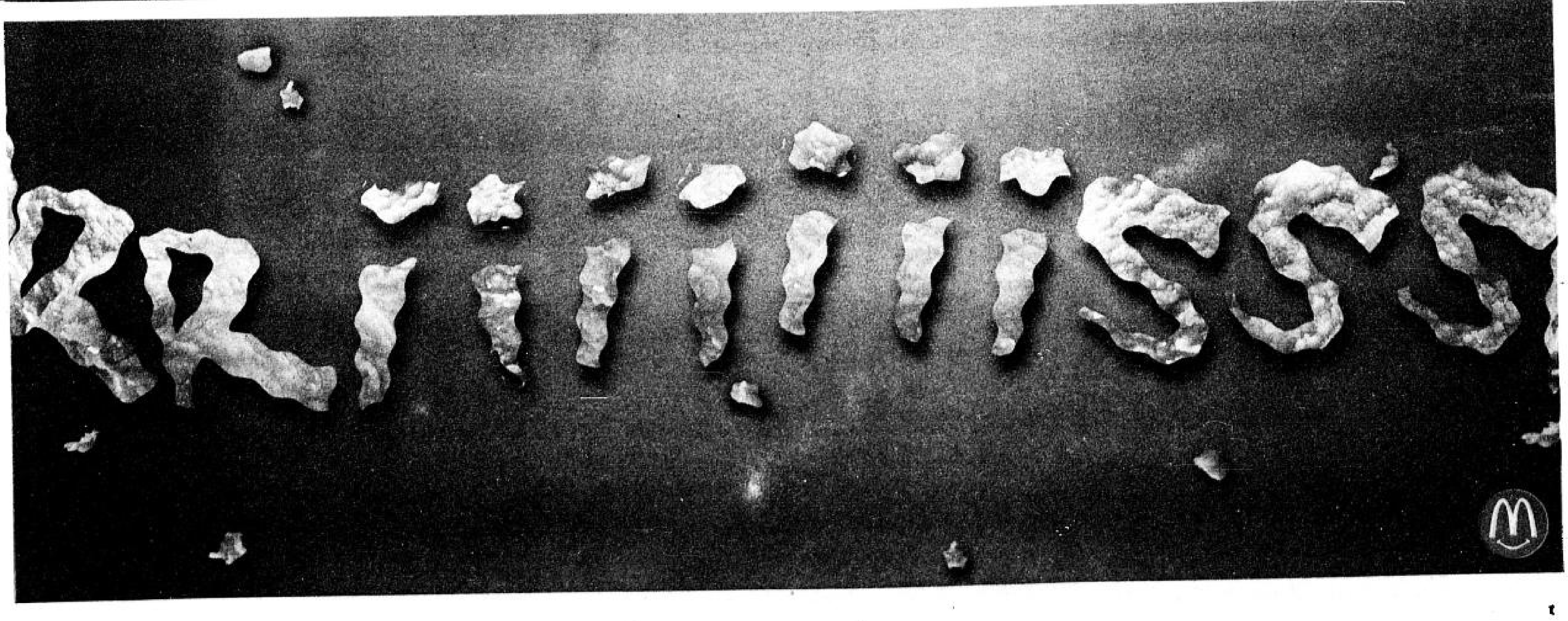
Ryan Tordesillas is a 20-year-old BS Management junior from Ateneo. He spends his waking hours playing billiards, basketball and NBA Live. He wants a girl who is "easy to talk to."



WHO would foul these guys out?

TAKING a break from playing

BOYS in the hood.



When boys become a girl's best friends

By Pamela Angela Salomon Pastor

Why have boy buds when you can giggle with your girl friends? 2bU! gives you the reasons

CONTRARY to the popular belief that men cannot have purely platonic relationships with women, today more and more females have found best friends in their male counterparts. Of course, even more women have gay best friends, but hey, that's a different ball game.

We all know that women outnumber men. So why can't women stick to tradition and just giggle with their girlfriends? Let me tell you why:

- **While most guys are terrible at being good boyfriends, they can actually be great friends.** Without the stress of jealousy, commitment, looming anniversaries and other dates that should-never-be-not-even-once forgotten, women and men can have pretty good relationships.
- **They're not afraid to get their hands dirty.** While most women squeal when being splattered with mud, men like rolling in it. They don't worry about ruining their manicure or getting dabbed with spaghetti sauce on their shirt. They're more relaxed, less conscious. That makes them more fun.
- **They don't spend too much time going on bathroom breaks.**
- **They don't constantly complain that they're getting fat.**
- **They think like guys.** How else will you be able to dissect the head of that guy you've been drooling for without your male best friend's analysis of the situation? How will you snag Mr. Perfect without his guidance? Your male best friend knows what and how guys think—he is one.
- **They give great advice.** While women tend to be more flowery with words, men tell it as it is (unless of course, they are in the middle of courtship or are trying to sweet talk girls into something). They jolt you back to reality.
- **You feel protected.** Now I do not mean that women are weak, weak creatures. I am a feminist myself. But it's nice to know that if someone starts beating you up, your male best friend will be there to help you cream them.
- **They act like big brothers.** They warn you about no-good idiots who are after you. But of course, they're actually all big babies, which brings us to the next reason:
- **You can mother them.** Let's face it. Men—whether they're 16 or 60—are kids. It's a given fact.
- **They don't fall in love with guys.** How many friendships have been ruined because of pals going after the same guy? Countless. This will never happen between you and your male best friend—to each his own.
- **They're not afraid of calories.** For most girls, pigging out is unheard of. Guys live for buffets and enjoy food more. That makes them great companions for eating out.
- **They don't like boy bands.** (Most of them, anyway.)
- **They're sweet.**
- **They don't shriek or scream.**
- **You can be yourself.** Forget about crossing your legs and dabbing at your little mouth with a napkin. You can relax and chill and do whatever you want. You can be a guy with them.
- **They don't get PMS (pre-menstrual syndrome)—ever.**
- **They don't talk about getting married—at least, not to you.**
- **They're not too clingy.**
- **They won't get mad when your phone is busy.** Then again, in this day and age when almost everyone has call-waiting, who does?
- **They share your love for computers and passion for the Internet.**
- **You can talk about the NBA—and not just about how cute the players are.**
- **They don't easily freak out.** They can handle gory and morbid stuff. They don't get terrified.
- **Their parents are not strict with them.** Unlike most girls, they don't have curfews and can do what they want when they want to. That means more time for you to hang out.

But, of course, like everything else in this world, having boy buds also has its downside. Here are a few:

- **Their girlfriends get jealous of you.** Admit it, sometimes, us girls can be pretty unreasonable. Some females would not be 100 percent comfortable with the idea that you're hanging out with her guy a lot.
- **They forget you're a girl.** They've been calling you "dude" for such a long time that they've forgotten your gender. This is why you'd hear your guy friend say, "Whoa!" when he sees you all dressed and made up. This is why they think it's okay to salivate over other girls and comment on their bodies when you're around. This is the reason they tell disgusting jokes and expect you to laugh with them. Don't expect them to open doors for you and, yes, don't expect them to carry your things. And unless you start wearing skirts to show off your legs, it will probably take a bump on their heads to remember you're a girl.

- **They can be pretty obnoxious.** They can rattle off endless cuss words for minutes. They can tell sexist jokes and can be pretty sarcastic at times. But once you sharpen your tongue and prepare your own vocabulary of insults, you may just beat them at their own game.
- **Sometimes, they can take you for granted.** You've been with them so long that they expect you to hang around forever. If they blow off your plans because they suddenly got a date with some hot chick, they expect you to grin and bear it. If they ask you to befriend this girl they've got the hots for so they can get on her good side, they expect you to do it for them—even if you hate her guts. Let's face it. Most men really need a dose of sensitivity.
- **You may end up as a girlfriend substitute.** This happens a lot—especially with males who are afraid of commitment. You end up going to his prom or to his all-important office function as his date. He introduces you to his parents just to stop them from asking about his almost non-existent dating status. He finds security in your friendship and seeks comfort in your companionship. You become his ultimate excuse for not going out with other women.
- **You have to endure their burping contests.** And when you tell them to say, "Excuse me," you get chided for being too prude.
- **They may scare away boys that you like.** Having other boys around you all the time may cause a hottie to think twice about asking you out—especially if he's the type that scares easily. One, he may think that any of the guys is more than just a friend. Two, even if they are just your friends, he probably knows that if he screws up and hurts you, he's going to be in trouble. Then again, why should this bother you? If the potential boyfriend cannot even stand up and face your friends, how can you expect him to be strong when it is needed?
- **Your boyfriend can get jealous of them.** In the same way that their girls do not appreciate your presence, your guy might not like the idea of you hanging out with your close male buds. The male ego is a very, very sensitive thing. More so if the owner dotes on it. As bad as this sounds, sometimes, it boils down to a difficult choice—your boyfriend or your boy-friends?
- **They can dump you when their girlfriends get too jealous.** Since you are expected to always be the perfect and understanding friend, they don't think you're going to mind if they stop hanging out with you. "She doesn't understand why we have to go out and watch movies when I can do it with her." But you've got to understand the guy. He's probably pretty sick of hearing her whine, "Why is she texting you again? Doesn't she have any other friends?" and "What! You're going out again? But you just went out with her last week!" And just in case that particular relationship ends, they expect to be able to pick up from where they left and resume the friendship like nothing happened. Yes, friends make sacrifices. Even hard ones.
- **They can fall in love with you.** If I'd had a peso for each time this has happened in history, I would be able to buy that Ford 150 now. Unless you feel the same way about your guy friend and you want the friendship to become more than just that, the situation may not be pretty. Either you forget about it and laugh about it when you get older or your friendship goes kaput. Definitely not a good way to end things.
- **You might end up falling in love with them.**

ILLUSTRATIONS: STEPH BRAVO

E-mail the author at: pammy@exchange.ph

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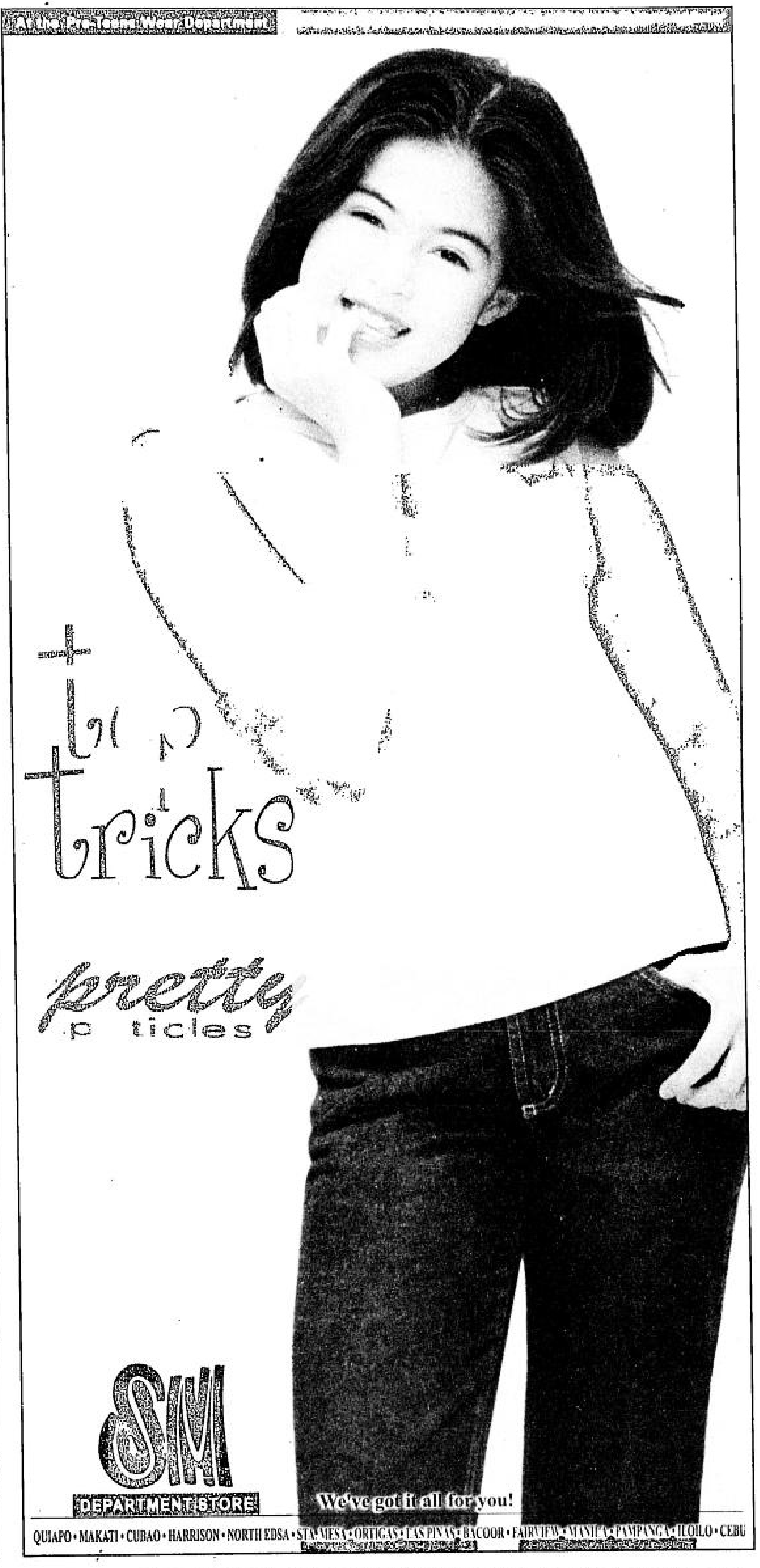
parent trapped

ms. merit answers

Q Your article about transferring school couldn't be more timely. I am thinking about transferring my children to another school before I read your article. Now I am thinking twice - I find their school so old fashioned and very ordinary, I wish they would come up with more activities, otherwise, they have a very good turnout of graduates who excel in college entrance exams. JGA

As mentioned earlier, parents and family education should play a more vital role in a child's development. If school has become boring or you are worried that the arts and other non-essential subjects are being overlooked, you should fill in the gaps yourself. Take him to concerts, plays, movies, shows or read poetry or articles together. Help your child develop the imaginative and complex thinking skills missing in big classrooms. Exams gear your child to skimming and memorizing important details and facts, not for analyzing and deeper understanding. To develop their analytical skills, devise methods and strategies for your kid to think. You can have your kids turn the short story into a play or poem. Ask them probing questions that go beyond plot. You can use real situations to apply what they learn in math and science. You can go over newspaper articles and discuss with your child the repercussions, etc. Stimulate their thoughts. Do projects with them and discuss how you can improve on the initial steps. Finally, keep in mind that after all the grading, we are left with standards measured in more meaningful ways your kids can only benefit. Good Luck.

Please send your questions to merit paper products, parent trapped, 88 Samson Road, cor MPL Road, Sucat, Muntinlupa City, or fax us at 02.842.1626.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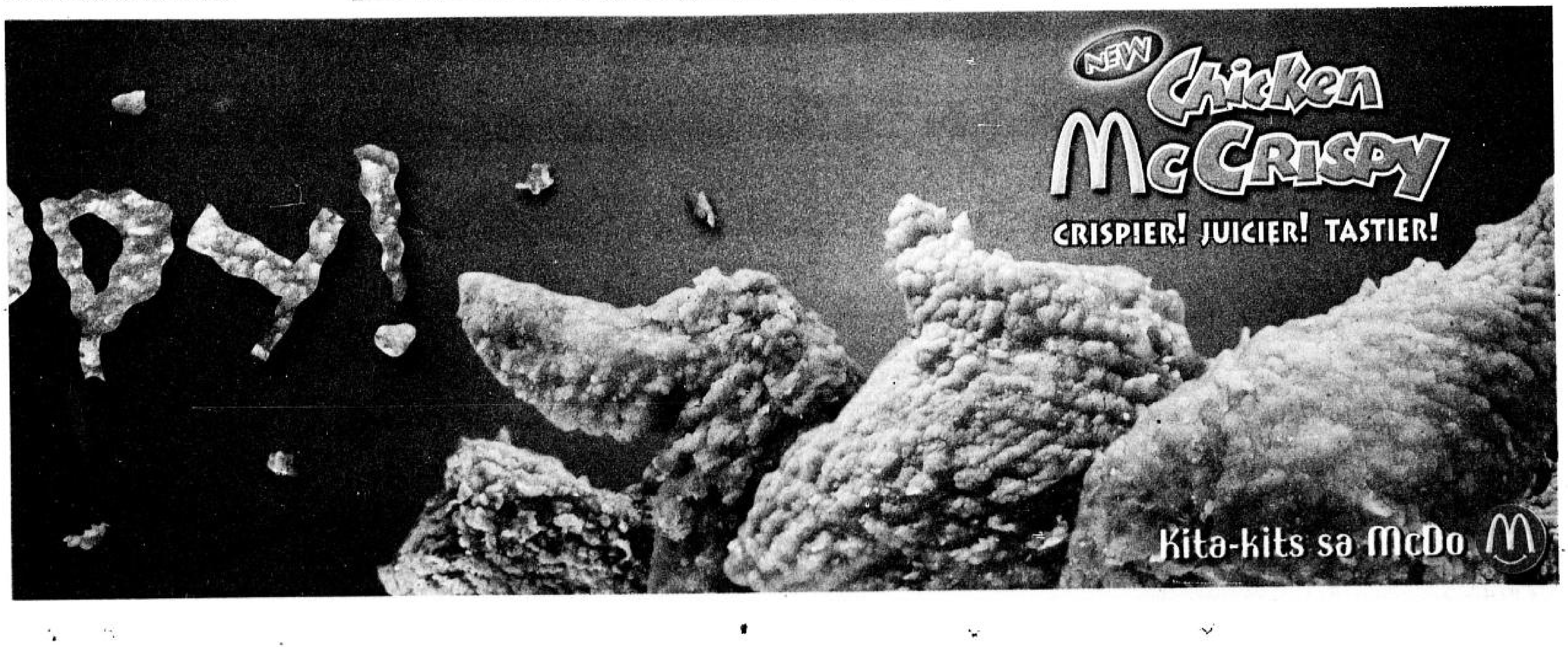

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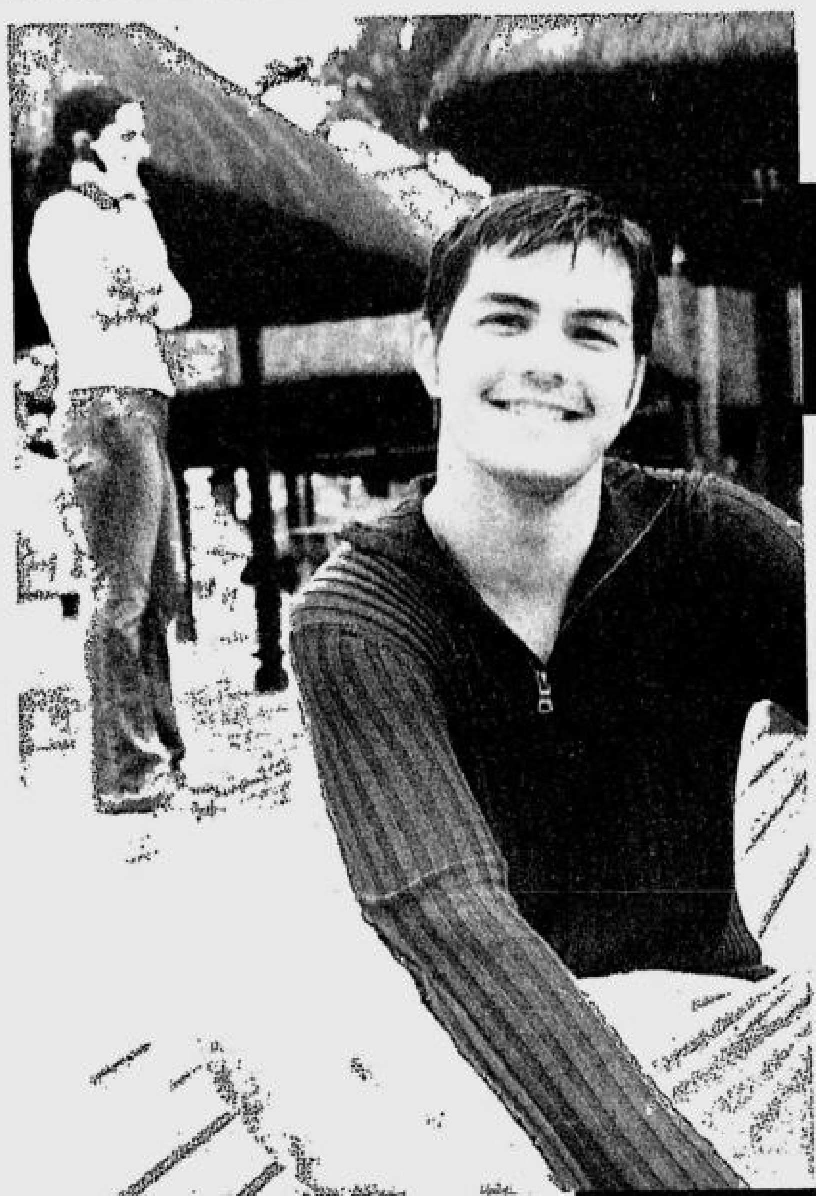


WHILE ED was being photographed, two kids came up to him and told him he was cute then ran off.

BY TAMMY DAVID
2bU! Correspondent

BEFORE THE YEAR 2000 ended, MYX, Studio 23's music channel, launched a massive "We are different!" campaign. And I'm convinced that this is the music channel for the music freak! (No way! *Si* David Bowie *ba yan!*) Aside from their variety of music, MYX's pride is their VJs. Quoting from their webby "Four VJs will alternately preside over the MYX arena—Kaz, John, Ed and Clara—creating a revolution of what VJing is all about."

I had the opportunity to interview 20-year-old Edward "Ed" Feist since his style is the one I liked best—very smooth, direct and not too theatrical. I interviewed him the day after he arrived from a break in the US and I expected him to be cranky and tired. Surprisingly, he didn't have the VJ/star complex and he was very accommodating even though I was such a mess during the interview. So for an hour, I got feisty with one of the hottest faces to hit TV this year.

> One reason why MYX shouldn't minimize sight

What's your nationality?

I'm Australian, but my dad is German.

And your mom?

Spanish, so Spanish-German, but I was born in Australia.

Where did you grow up?

Here.

Where did you go to school?

I.S. (International School)

Are you still in school?

Yeah, I'm in THAMES right now.

So you went to film school?

I went to the States for a year. I was majoring in theater arts and I was planning to go to film school but I decided to come back here.

Were you always interested in music?

Yeah, ever since I was 2 years old.

So you grew up listening to what?

Everything from pop to hip-hop, everything! All types of music, jazz, classical...

Do you have a favorite band?

Right now, I'm listening a lot to Lenny Kravitz.

Do you remember the first CD or cassette you ever purchased?

First CD I ever bought was the "Boomerang" soundtrack.

Did you go through any phase, like the Pearl Jam phase?

Yeah, I did. Actually, in high school I had a band and we did like Pearl Jam, Stone Temple Pilots.

And you were?

I was the singer.

What was your band's name?

Oh, we didn't have a name. We only did school events and stuff.

Not even a stupid name?

No, no... (laughs) We weren't creative enough, I guess.

How about going to school looking wasted with long hair and nail polish?

Oh, no, I never went into that. I never went into the whole big grunge-y look.

Best video you've ever seen?

It would be the Jamiroquai video.

"Virtual Insanity"?

Yeah.

How about books, do you like reading books?

Yeah, I like reading books. I read anything.

So what's the latest book you've read?

It's a book called "Left Behind," I don't know if you've heard of it. I Can't remember the author's name. It's like a sci-fi sort of thing.

If you were to direct a movie based on a novel, what novel would it be?

"Animal Farm."

If you were to do theater, what would be your dream role?

A role I'd love to play but I don't think I'll ever be able to do is Jean Valjean from "Les Mis."

How did you get into MYX?

I auditioned, it went through for about a month until they chose me.

How did the auditions go? Did you freak out?

Yeah, it was nerve-racking in the beginning, like the first few times 'cause we auditioned for about two weeks, every other day.

Did you expect to be chosen or it was the usual "I didn't expect it"?

No. Well, whenever I audition for something I always...I don't like thinking about it. I don't wanna expect that I'm gonna get it or I'm not gonna get it 'cause usually, if I'm thinking about it, I get really worried, and in the audition process, it usually reflects badly on me, so usually I don't get it. So I went into this one not really thinking about it. Just you know, being myself and let my personality come out and so I guess it worked.

Was there a time you auditioned and you really wanted the part so badly but never got it?

All the time, I mean, every commercial I auditioned for...you know, I haven't done a commercial in 10 years, so yeah, I guess it's really...it takes a lot on your ego 'cause you know you go to all these auditions...you never get picked but I guess, it's the luck of the job.

But you're a model now, right?

Yes.

So do you prefer being a model or a VJ?

Well, actually six months ago, I decided to stop modeling altogether. And then this whole VJ thing came up so it worked perfectly for me. It's a change of career. And then I got asked to become the image model for... well, to join a competition for Image Model of SM. So I decided to join and see what would happen, and I ended up winning, so I guess I'm back into modeling.

So, what did you feel during the competition? You looked so calm...

The competition was...it's very disorganized so I was annoyed the whole time. It was taped so it took about five hours to do the competition. You know, I was expecting it to be a two-hour-long thing, you know, do a little fashion show, whatever, then they choose the winners. Apparently, we had like all these bands playing, people singing and all, and it ended up taking five hours plus. In the beginning we had to re-do the whole intro because the stage managers weren't organized, so it was just very annoying.

What's in store for you this year besides MYX?

Well, this year I'm just working on MYX and then SM, I'll be doing pictorials for them. Then, I'm talking to Viva right now about a recording contract.

Are you gonna sing?

Yeah, for singing.

Solo?

Yeah.

Are you gonna sing like rock songs or pop?

I'm looking more into pop right now.

If you were to do a duet, who would you pick?

Beyoncé from Destiny's child.

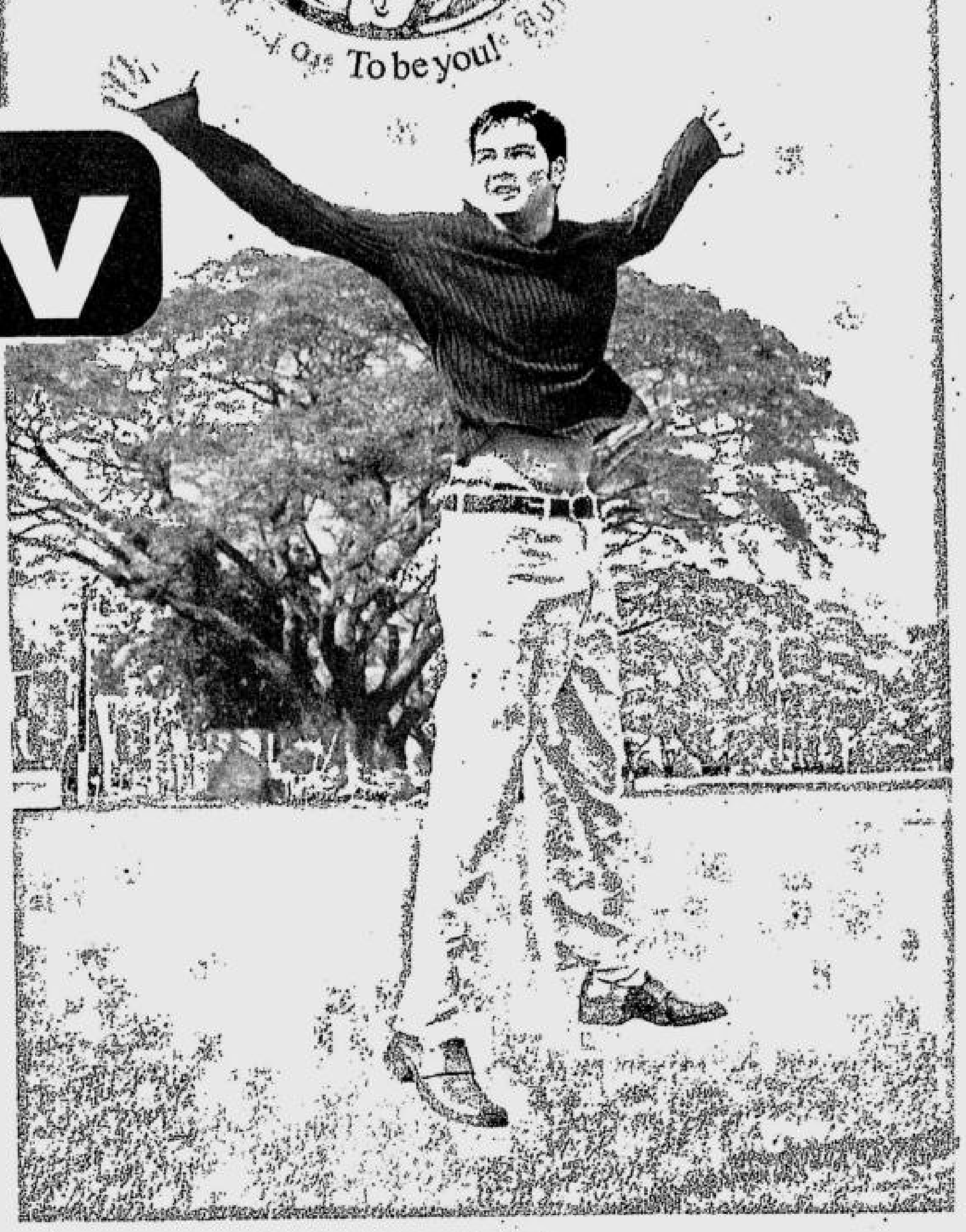
How about local?

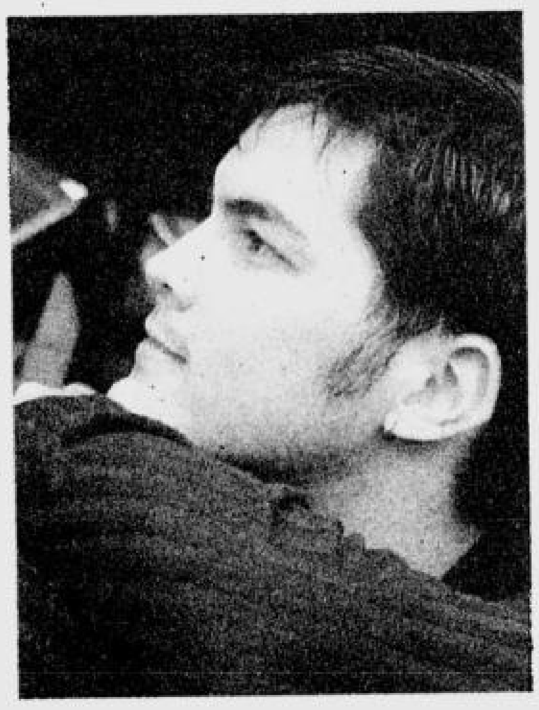
Regine.

Would you give Philippine show biz a try?

Yeah, I would. I'd like to...well, my ultimate goal is to be, you know, in the States...an international star, but I think to start off...I'd love it if the Filipino show biz community would give me a chance.

So did you audition for a soap opera or any teeny movie?





I'd like to concentrate more on my singing rather than acting. But you don't know what the future holds.

So what do you sing in the shower or in public or while you're driving?

I used to perform in this place called Caramba in the Fort. I used to sing there. It's a Latin band, so we sing like Ricky Martin, Santana...all the Latin acts...Marc Anthony...

So are you gonna sing Latin songs in your album?

Most probably.

Were you popular in high school?

Yes, I was.

As what? As cute? As the model? As the actor?

As...I was the theater actor and I was in most of the plays...sophomore year to senior.

So what was the best high school play you've participated in?

I played Macduff in Shakespeare's "Macbeth."

You were killed in Act 2 or something!

Yeah, (laughs) but it was a great fight scene. I was the second lead in this.

Any mosh-pit experience wherein you got hit or something?

A few years ago, MTV Alternative nation came here and I was in the mosh-pit of that. I got hit and kicked a few times.

So what's a typical day for VJ Ed?

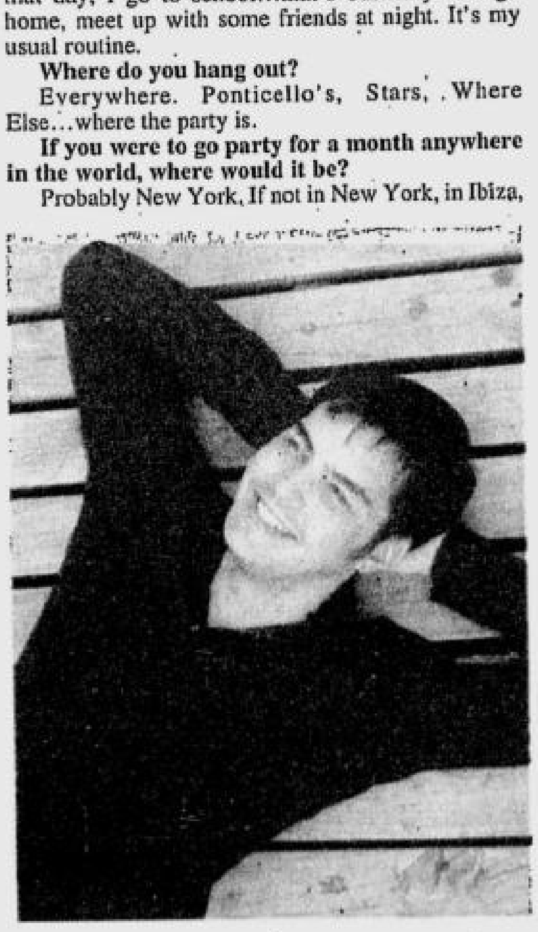
Wake up, work out, go to taping...If I have school that day, I go to school...that's basically it. I go home, meet up with some friends at night. It's my usual routine.

Where do you hang out?

Everywhere. Ponticello's, Stars, Where Else...where the party is.

If you were to go party for a month anywhere in the world, where would it be?

Probably New York, If not in New York, in Ibiza, Spain.



Habla Espanol?

Si.

What is your greatest extravagance?

I'm a big shoe freak, like my closet is full of shoes.

More on what? Leather or...?

Yeah, leather. Actually, everything. I've got from leather to basketball shoes, tennis shoes whatever. Slippers!

Slippers? Oh, like the Adidas ones?

Yeah, yeah.

Are you a brand freak?

No, I'm not. I like clothes that don't necessarily have to be Armani, although I do like Armani and all the brands, but I can always find nice clothes that aren't brand names.

Do you have a tattoo?

Two. One on my thigh and one on my back.

Who do you admire in the recording industry?

Martin Nievera.

VJ?

Joey Mead

Film?

My favorite actor is Al Pacino.

How about director?

Ron Howard.

Theater?

Theater? Hmm...what's that guy's name? Some comedy writer, "The Odd Couple" writer. (Neil Simon)

If you could be a sound, what sound would you be?

A sound?

Yeah, like lots of people told me that you're so quiet.

Really? Like who? Hmm...a saxophone sound.

Got any brothers or sisters?

I have two older brothers and a younger sister.

So are they proud of your VJ stint?

Yeah, definitely, yeah.

Are your brothers or sister into acting too?

Hmm...no. My eldest brother is a songwriter, producer. He used to work here, but he's now in LA and my other brother is a lawyer

Are you dating?

Not anyone in particular right now. I'm concentrating on my career.

So what are your priorities?

My priorities are my career, school and my family.

Do you get bored with your job?

No, I love it. 'Cause you know, aside from the taping we get to do, we have parties, we interview, like in the past few weeks, I interviewed a bunch of DJs. So it's different all the time.

So what do you think about the club culture here?

I think it's fairly new compared to other countries, but I think it's a good thing, you know. I think it's good that the Philippines is being exposed to these DJs and this type of music and I guess, this lifestyle.

Anyway, what's funny about yourself that makes you smile when you think about it?

My singing! I think it's good that, you know, you can laugh at yourself with what you do. When I was a kid I never thought that I can be a singer, but then I went into a journey and did all that and so now I just laugh at myself whenever I see myself singing or whenever I'm onstage. I never thought I could do it, but here I am doing it.

What is there in your life that you take pride in?

My work and my family.

So you wanna be remembered as Ed Feist the singer, Ed Feist the actor, Ed Feist the model or Ed Feist the VJ?

Ed Feist, the all-around entertainer (laughs).

Back to music. A few quick poppy questions: N'Sync or Backstreet?

N' Sync.

Britney or Christina?

Christina.

Korn or Limp Bizkit?

Limp Bizkit.

Anti Napster or Pro-Napster?

Anti.

Anti?

Yeah, I think it's unfair for the artist.

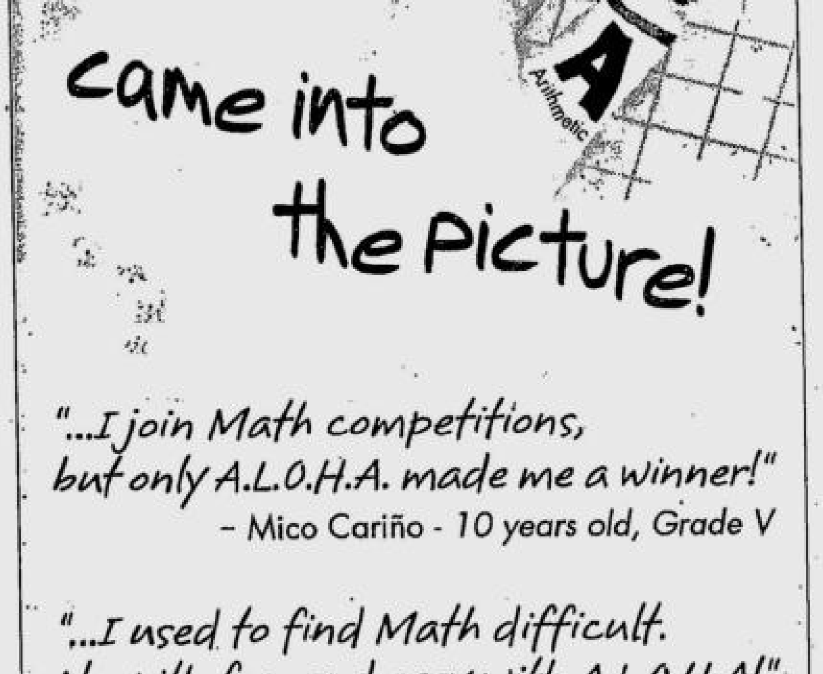
If some band would come here to the Philippines, who would you want to interview?

Lenny Kravitz.

If you were to interview Eminem, what's the first question you're going to ask him?

Why are you soooo mad at the world? (laughs)

Math wasn't their favorite subject until



came into the picture!

"...I join Math competitions, but only A.L.O.H.A. made me a winner!"
- Mico Cariño - 10 years old, Grade V

"...I used to find Math difficult. Now it's fun and easy with A.L.O.H.A!"
- Andrei Mendoza - 7 years old, Gr. II

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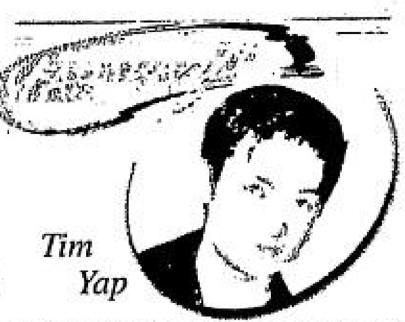

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V-shaped body

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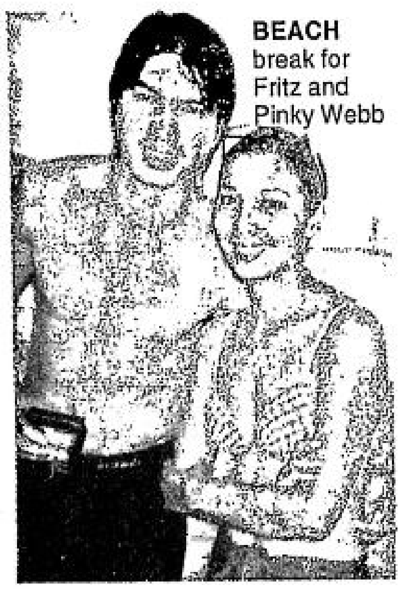

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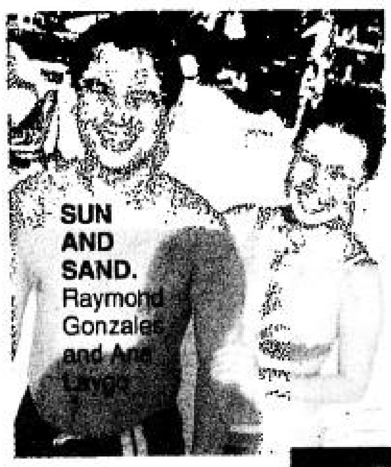

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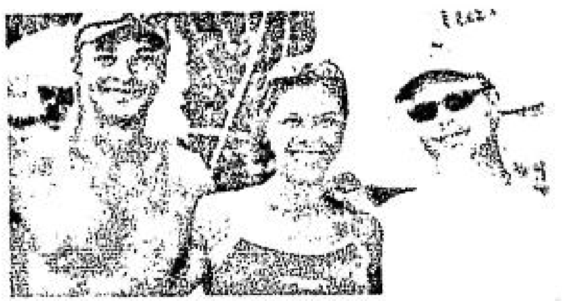

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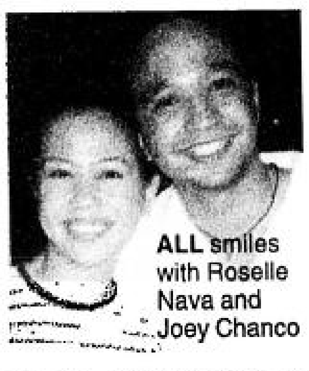

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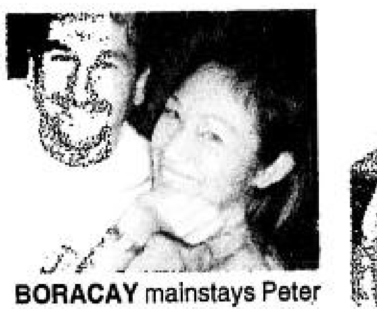

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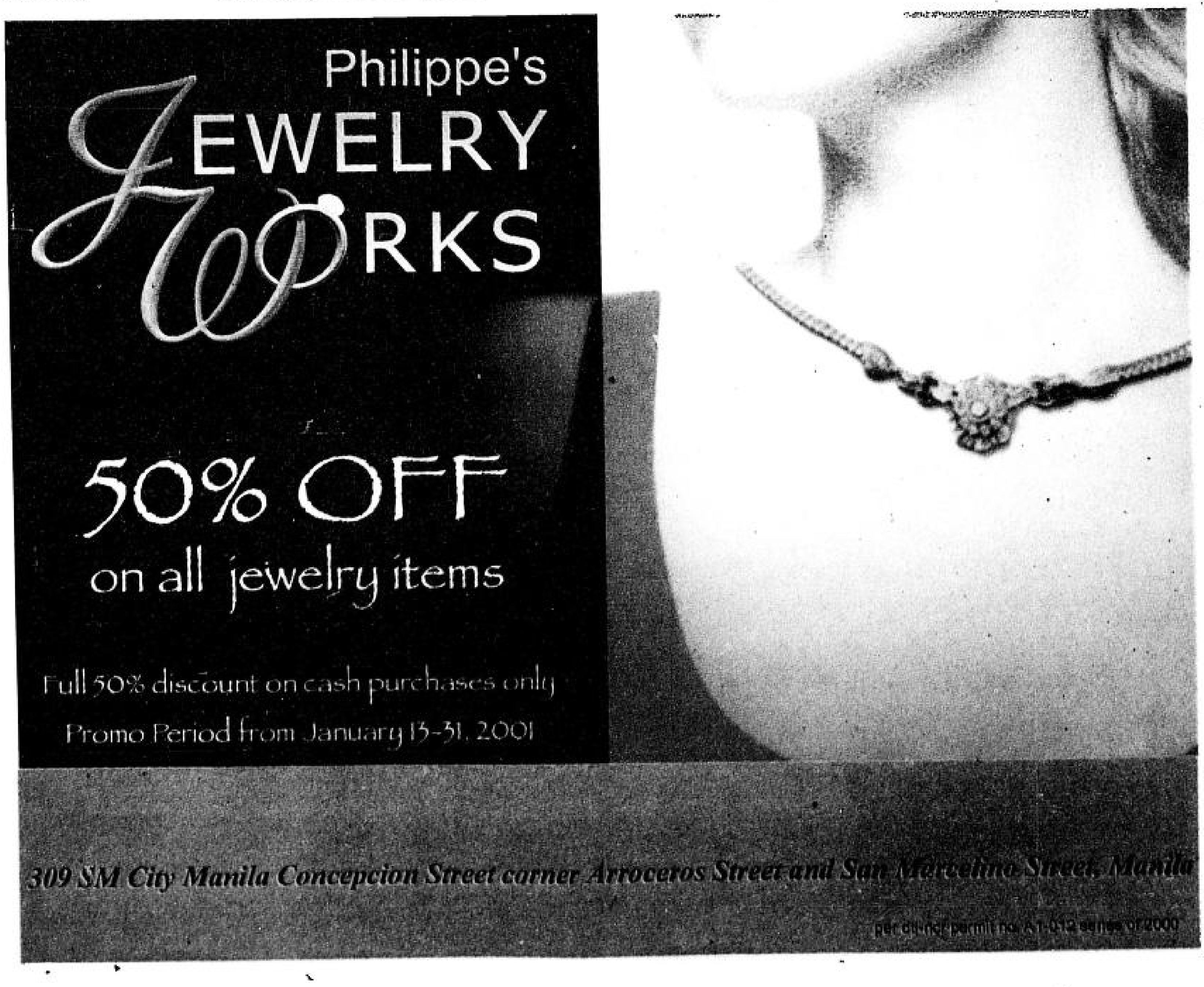

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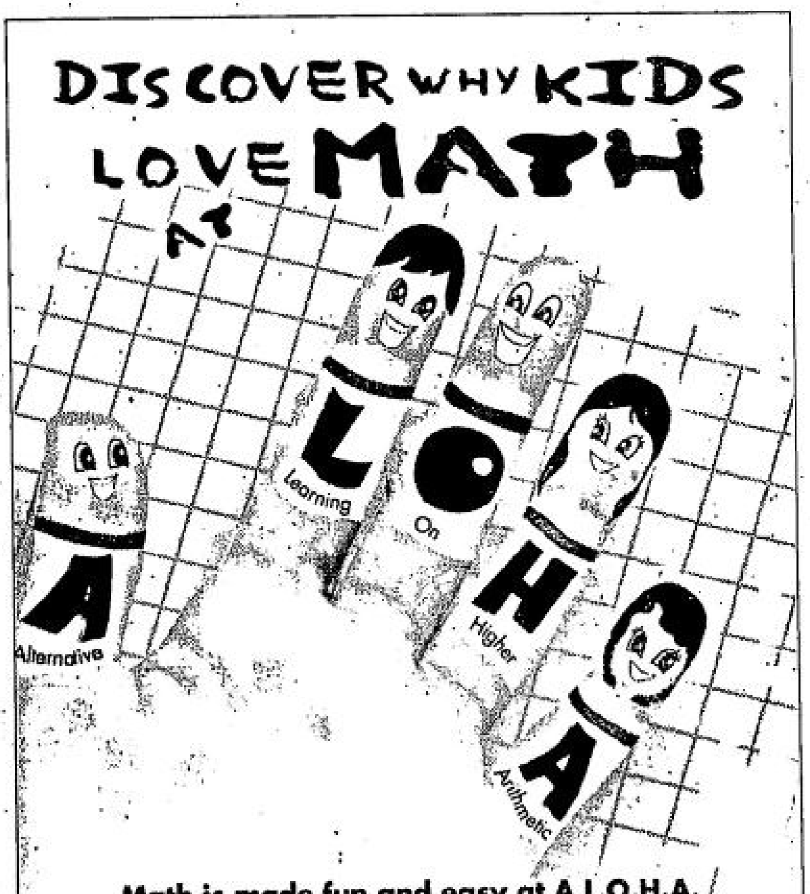

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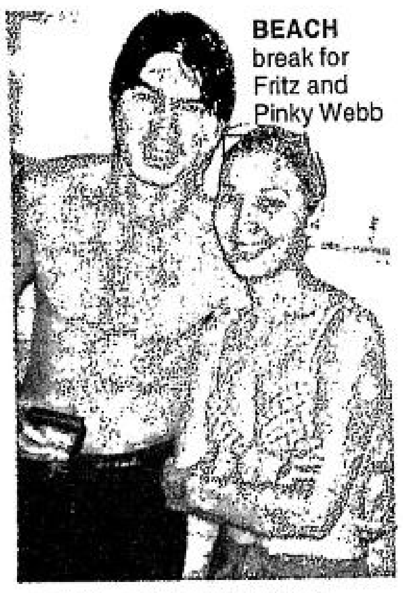
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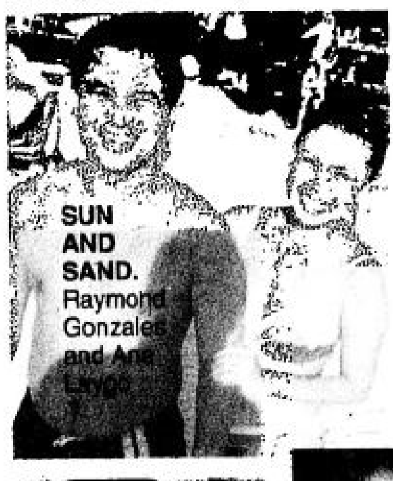
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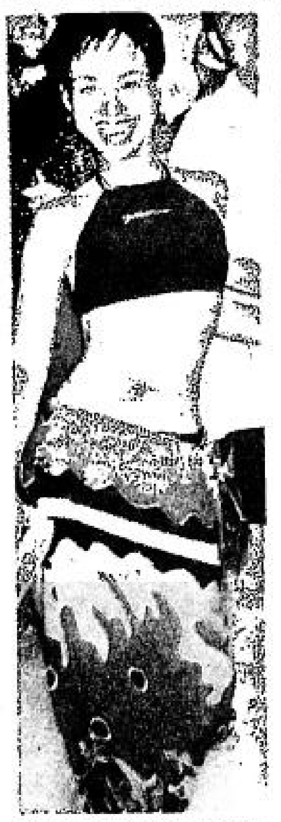
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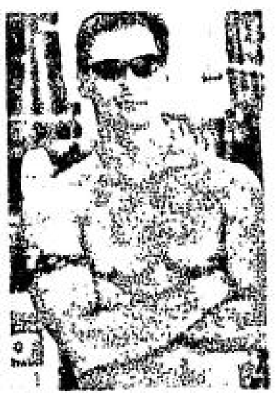
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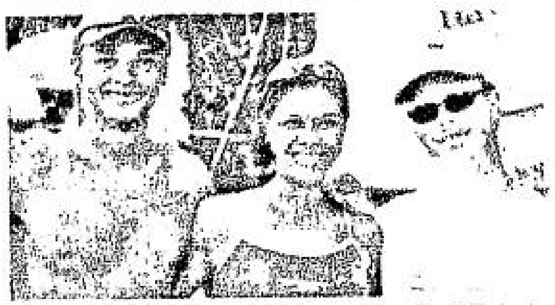
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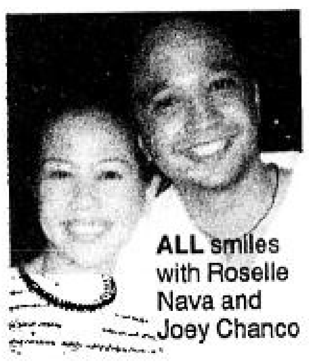
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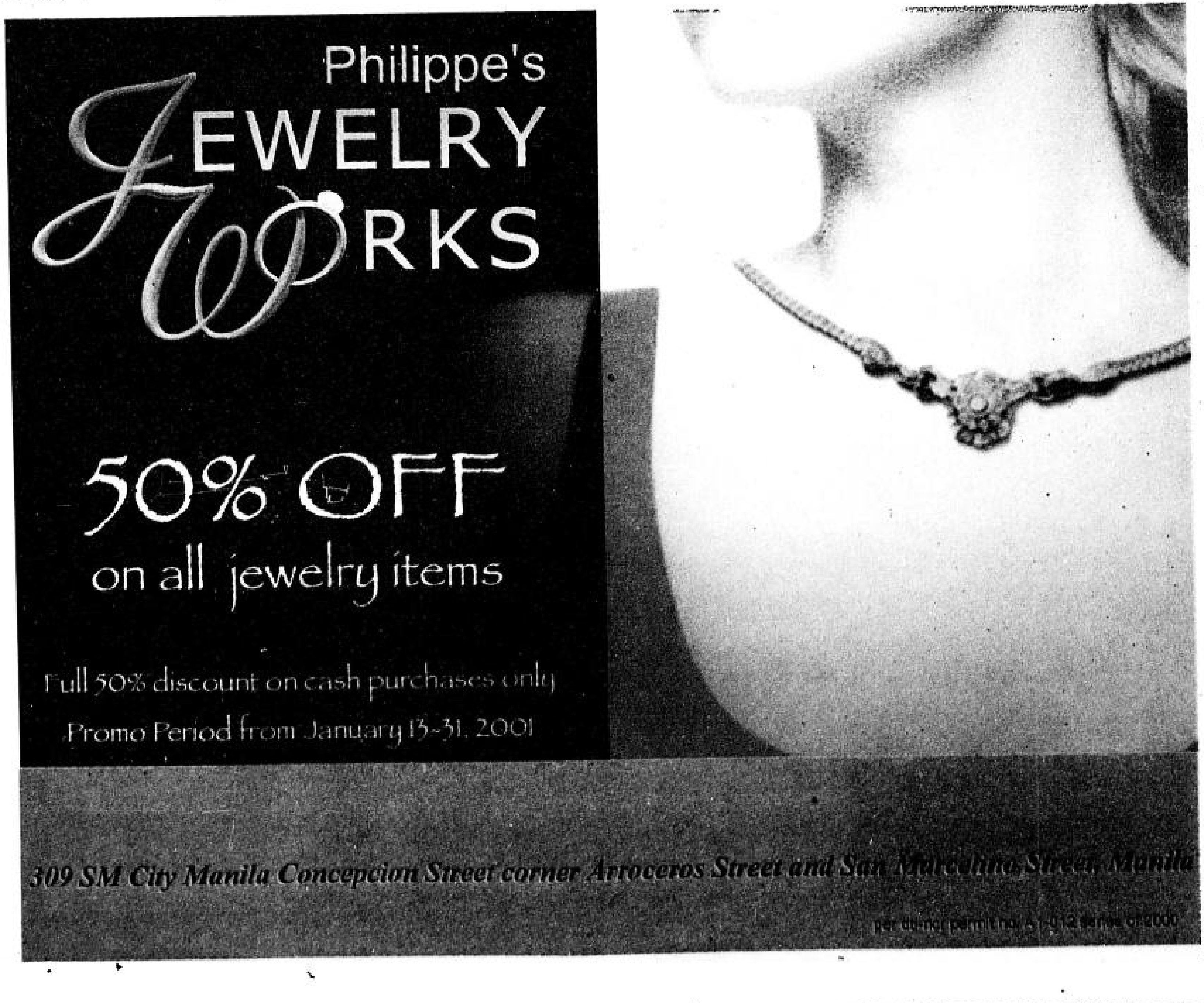
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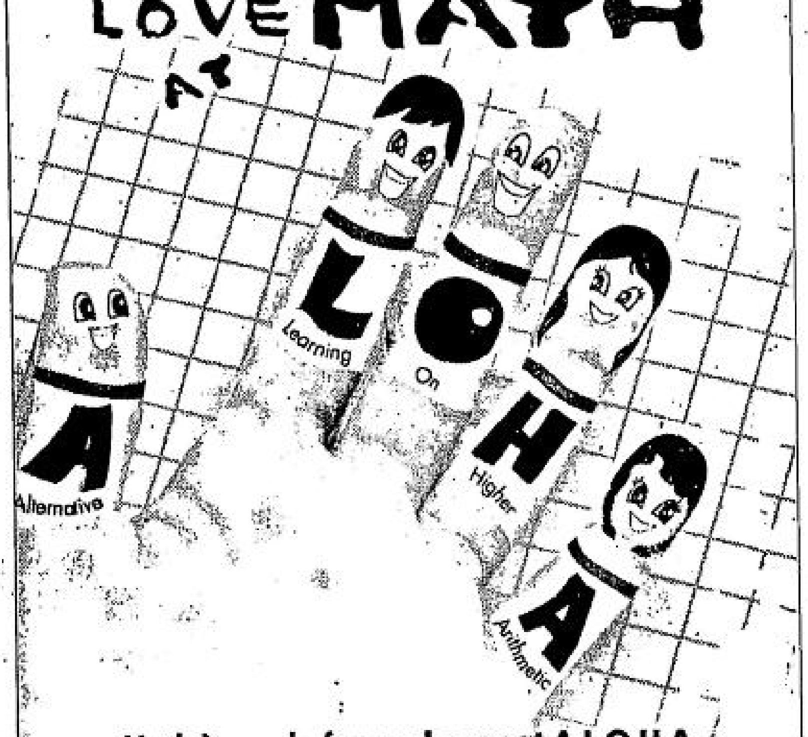

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ALOHA

On slashing the one-eyed serpent

BY JAFRUTS
2bu! Correspondent University of the Philippines Manila

WHAT could have possessed the gifted, articulate, dignified staff of 2bu! to dish out an article about this, of all things? I figured, everyone has got to know how it goes. So what's the point? And why should I be caught holding the bloody weapon…or pen, as the case may be? In our relatively conservative culture, things like this are spoken of in hushed tones and low voices. The result is utter confusion. Hearsay turns into fact and fact becomes exaggeration.

At the risk of personal indignity and charges of harassment, I asked people (mostly girls) what they wanted to find out about circumcision. Apparently, the thirst for knowledge on this touchy, touchy topic was greater than expected. Circumcise literally means "to cut around." Around what, you say? Check your halo. It may be on too tight.

Circumcision became widespread primarily because of the Jew, who used it as a symbol of their covenant with God (if you're really that curious, you can look it up in Exodus). Other cultures have ascribed their own beliefs to the ritual, but these days it's done for hygiene. The foreskin covers the glans of the penis, like a cap for the little hip-hopper. No "part" of the organ is actually severed. Removing the loose skin prevents germs and bacteria from growing in what would be the perfect environment: dark, enclosed, moist and warm.

> To us males, it's the ultimate rite of passage. No, not losing your virginity, but losing your head, or the skin of your head

But enough of the science lesson. These days, circumcision is seen more as a rite of passage boys have to go through.

"Dad, do I really have to go through with this?"

"Yes, son. Your grandfather did it. I did it. Now it's your turn." You feign sickness, insanity, even death—just to get away from it. Then you think of all the lucky guys who had it done when they were babies. Speaking of which, they do use anesthesia for infant circumcision. Some people still argue that the pain causes mental trauma for the infant. This has yet to be proven.

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

I had the "privilege" of witnessing my own circumcision. More than all the cutting involved, I was worried about where they were going to stick the needle for anesthesia. It was injected a couple of inches below the waist. Big sigh of relief. As I waited for the numbness to set in, I began to think, "Hey, at least I'm in the hands of a skilled professional."

The way they were

Flashback to the good old days. When only four things were necessary to complete the process. One, a nice clean block. Two, a straight razor (yes, the same thing your grandfather used to shave with). Three, guava leaves; and four, a nice cool river. With your buddies, you would stand in fear and anticipation, pushing one another to the front of the line, coaxing someone to go first. The one who would go first would afterwards be known as the bravest.

Waiting patiently would be a man who had not seen the inside of an operating room, but would take sharp metal objects closer to the family jewels than even you would dare. You would begin to weigh the consequences of escaping this barbaric activity. Sure, you would be teased for life. Sure, you'd never grow tall. You'd never have a deep voice. It would rot and fall off and you'd never be a complete man. If you didn't lose it, it would at least stink to high heavens. Girls would avoid you like the plague. You knew those were all myths, right? Except maybe for that first one. And the last one, too, if you kept talking about it.

And so the process would begin. You would chew the guava leaves. This would produce a natural astringent to clean the wound after the cut was made. This of course would be cancelled out by millions of bacteria present in your saliva. The old man would ask if you were ready, then count from one to three. *Zip!* It is done. You think, "Hey, this isn't so bad after — aaaaAAAAGH I was wrong!" Then the fun part would begin. You would have to accurately aim the *bayabas* spitball. Some would use their hands to apply the solution. This, of course, would only make it dirtier. Then you make a beeline for the nearest source of running water to wash it off. Back then, there was no other water but the river. God knows what grew there.

Medical missions still perform circumcisions en masse, like an assembly line. Nurses come in first to clean, followed by a group of doctors who inject the anesthesia, then by the doctors who perform the operations. A group of 30 can perform 300 circumcisions in two hours. The "dorsal cut" is used because it's the easiest and fastest to make and sew up. If you really must see other variations of the permanent cut, there are magazines and websites for that. What's sure is that the process is still very sanitary. I never found out how the blade was cleaned in the boondocks, but I can imagine the little effort went into doing that.

Under the knife

But that was then, this is I and this is now. Somehow knowing all this didn't make me feel much better. As the doctor began, I made the completely sensible decision to close my eyes. As I crossed into the point of no return, I began to imagine what it would feel like to be the only kid in fourth grade who couldn't use a urinal. As this was going on I was praying I would not hear any expletives from anyone but myself. And no one wants to hear a doctor say "oops." It went off without a hitch. It was good to know because it certainly didn't feel like it.

What happens after? Well…there's a little pain. Actually, there's a lot of pain. Painkillers do help a little, and antibiotics keep the swelling to a minimum. You can't take a bath, but the wound does have to be kept clean. I once visited the PGH pediatric emergency room. Even then, I couldn't make a face half as pitiful as I did when swabbing my incredibly tender friend with Betadine. A skirt helps prevent friction and contact, which would be appreciated at other times but not this time.

Swelling is almost inevitable, and so it is surrounded by myths. Here's a good one. They say that if a girl sees a fresh circumcision, it will swell up, or *mangangamatis*, as most people call it. If you want to get serious, *pangangamatis* is a hematoma, or accumulation of blood. This happens if the wound gets infected, or if the doctor performing the operation makes a mistake in suturing. Under normal conditions, it should be healed in a couple of weeks.

But speaking of blood flowing to places, older guys tend to be more…excitable, and it shows. This is another reason circumcision is best done young. I heard of a guy in his 20's who had to wait half an hour after a rather pretty nurse was tasked to clean the "area of operation." Maybe he was thinking about waiting for it to get dirty again.

Some people speculate on whether it makes sex better. It doesn't, really. Nerve endings are concentrated in the head. Some may argue that the head contains more nervous tissue than the male brain. As for the girls…well a little piece of skin would hardly help you. There are a million questions yet to be answered about the gentleman's trim, and I know I've barely brushed the tip…of the iceberg.

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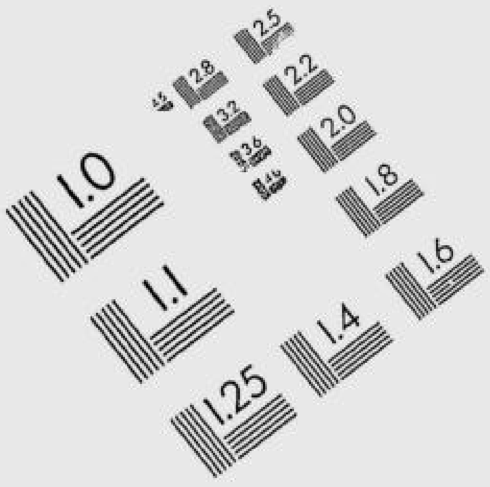
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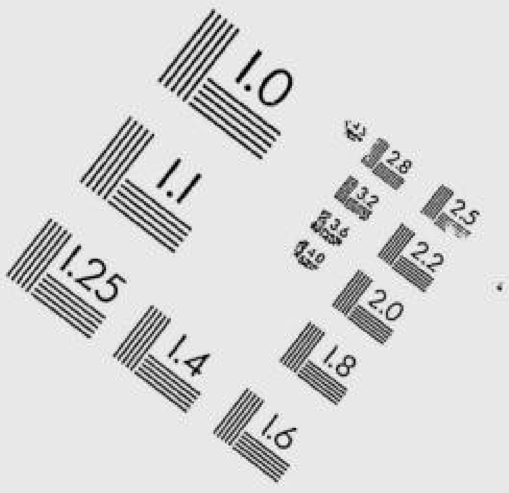
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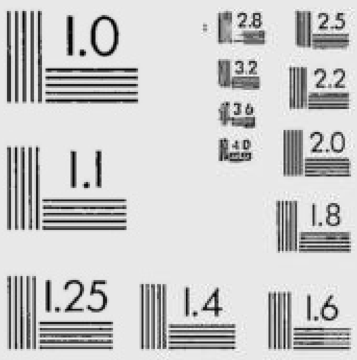
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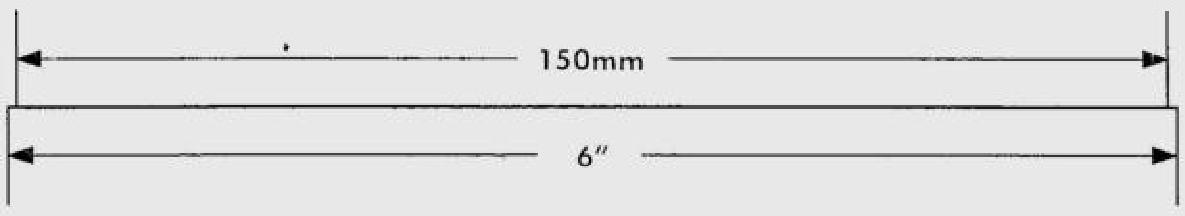

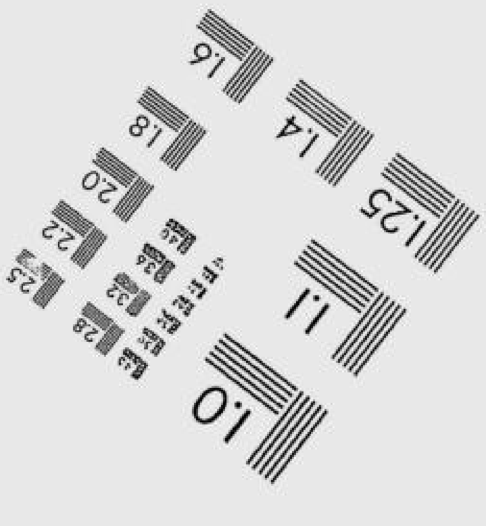
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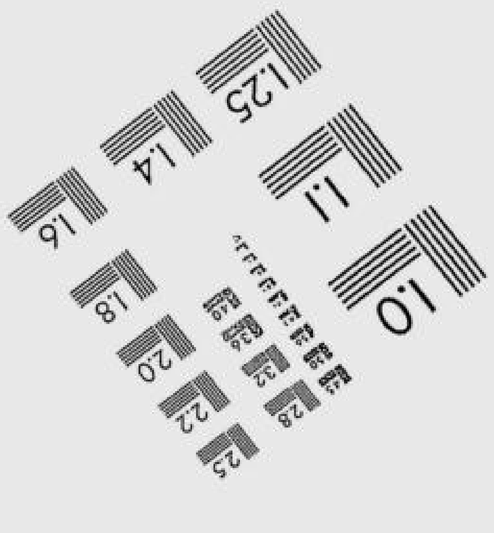
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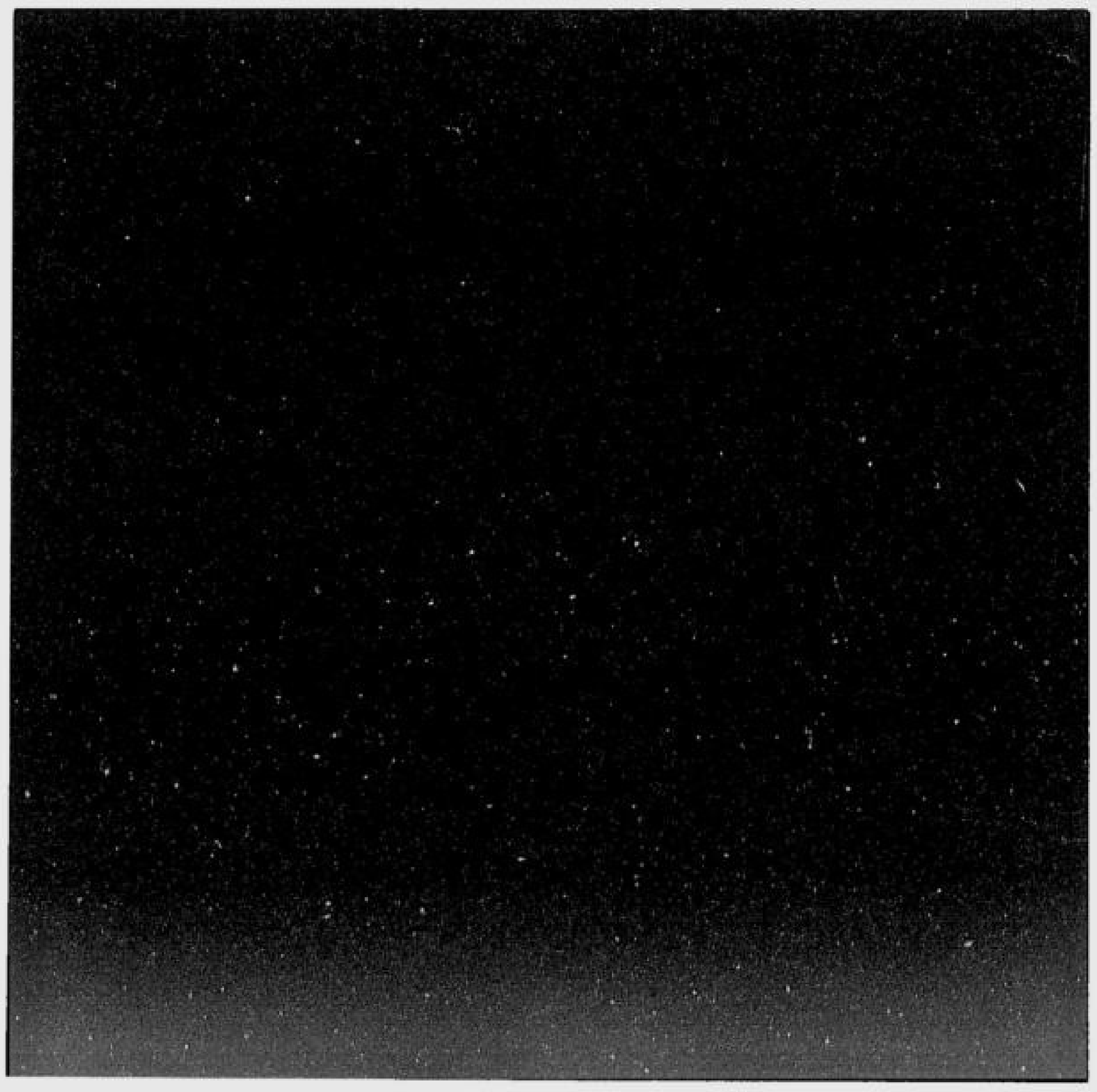

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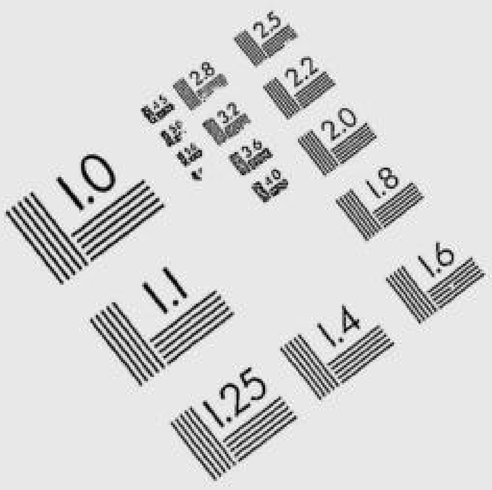
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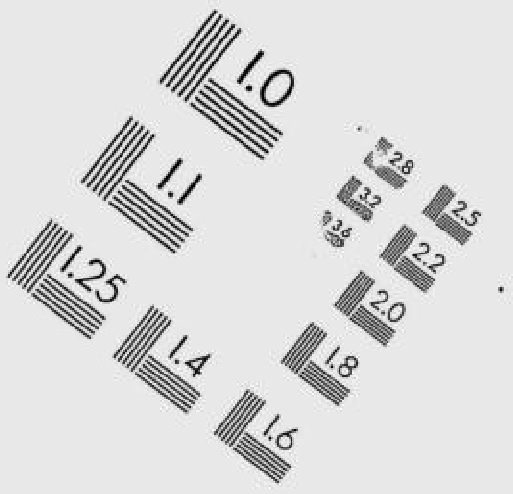
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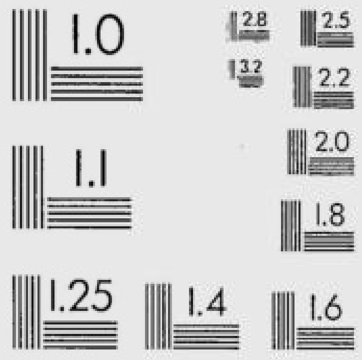
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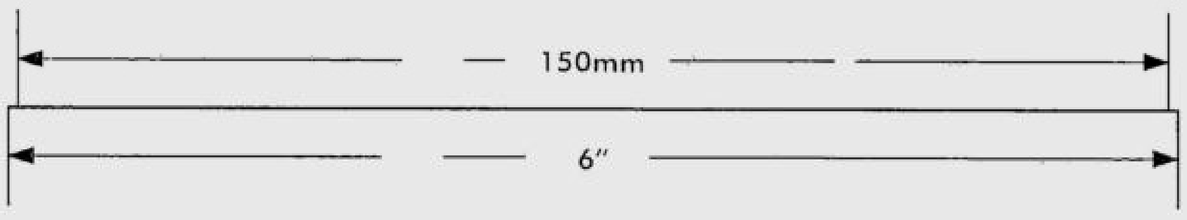

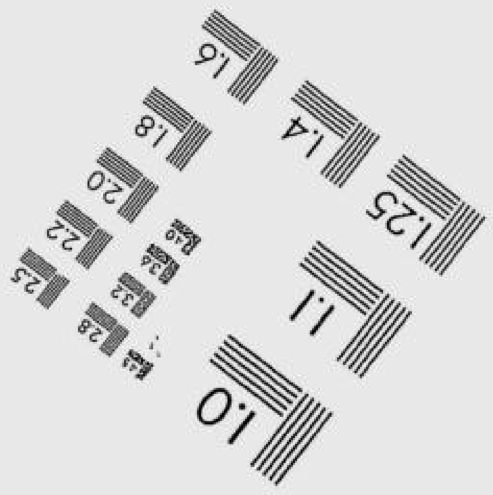
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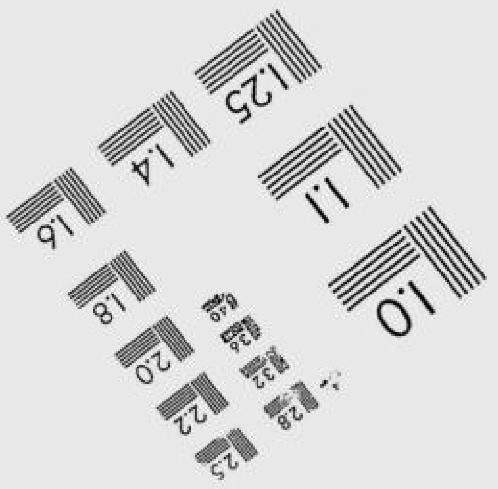
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